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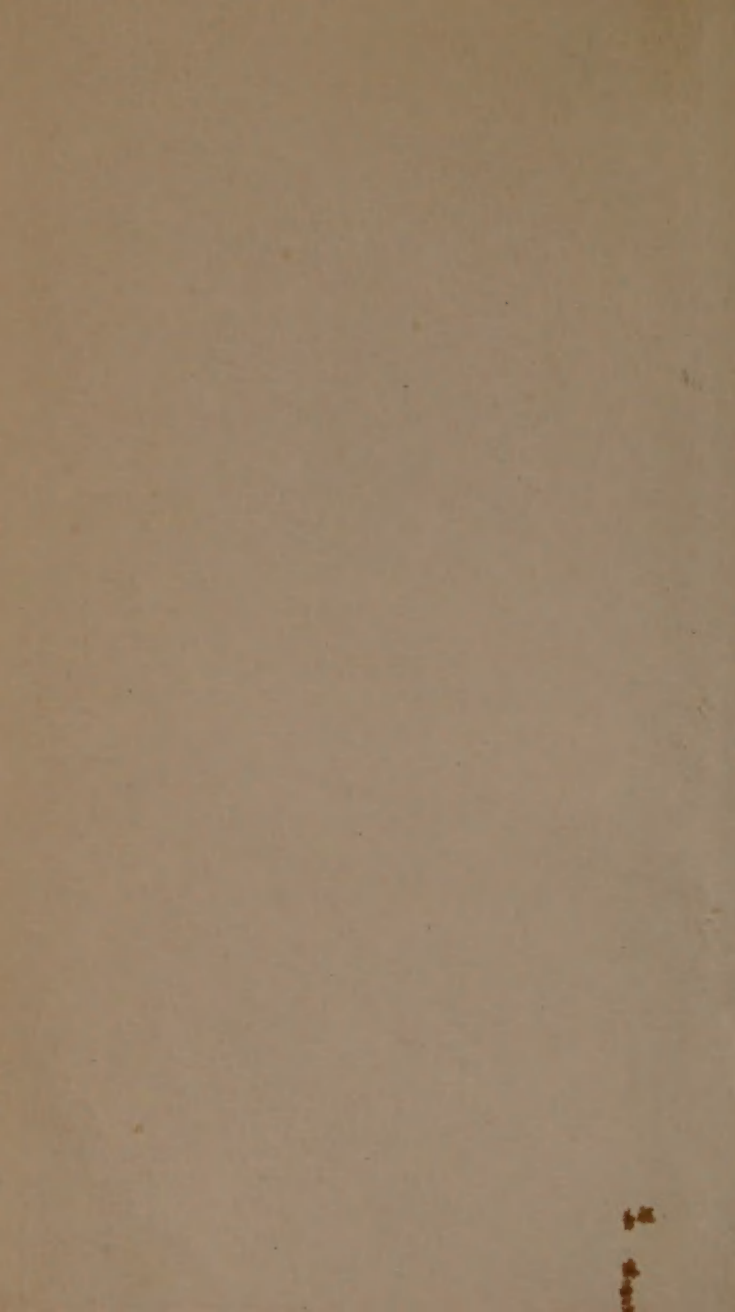


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MAN TO MAN

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MAN TO MAN

BY THE REV. PROF.
R. E. WELSH, M.A., D.D.



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AT CLAREMONT
California

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TO
OLD FRIENDS
IN
ENGLAND
AND
NEW FRIENDS
IN
CANADA

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'Will anybody give England a new type of young man, the nation's pride? The Government might offer a prize. High marks for modesty, simplicity, earnestness, book-work in the things that count, and the power of "grinding" at the art of life. General aim—highest possible differentiation from the snipe.'

RICHARD WHITEING, 'The Yellow Van.'

Introducing Man to Man

AN Exchange of Minds is wanted, where men shall confer freely upon the realities of masculine lives and give thought for thought without falsification and without fear of misunderstanding or betrayal. In spite of numerous volumes of good counsel already in the market, *the* book for younger men has yet to be written, frankly meeting them on their own ground, in true touch with their own problems and surging energies, and dealing with the intimacies of their minds and souls without cant and without false shame.

Henry Drummond had it in him to write such a book—witness his talks with university students. R. L. Stevenson, as he tells in his preface, started his *Virginibus Puerisque* with the fair intent, as *Advocatus Juventutis*, to write ‘a little volume of special pleadings which I might call without misnomer *Life at Twenty-Five*.’ When *the* book comes to be written, it will go farther than tell men how to succeed in the world and how to subdue the temptations of the flesh. It will give a transcript of the fevers of young blood, the love-

Introducing Man to Man

light, the insurrections against convention, the moods of tempest and depression, the mental questionings, the ambitious braveries, the social and domestic heroisms and misfits, which plague and animate men's lives. It will reflect what they think in solitude and say in confidences, will appeal to their nobler motives, and will exhibit the Christian life as it is seen at the angle of young manhood.

The chapters that follow, cast off in course of a busy life, make no attempt to cover the ground or fulfil the writer's ideal, and, like his previous books addressed to the same order of manhood, they deal with segments of life and experience and, along selected lines, try to exchange minds with comrade spirits, man to man.

When Men are Together

'The talk ranges loosely from point to point, and yet a certain sequence is always observed. The men are freed from conventions ; they like each other and know each other's measure pretty well. So the hours fly in merry fashion, and the brethren who carried on the symposium go away well pleased with themselves and with each other. Unity of aim, difference of opinion—those are the elements that make men's conversations valuable. . . . The subtle blending, the light give-and-take of chat between men and women is the true training which makes men graceful of tongue, kindly in the use of phrases, and, I believe, pure in heart.'

—JAMES RUNCIMAN, 'Joints in our
Social Armour.'

When Men are Together

WHEN men are together, during their after-meal leisure, in their 'dens' and their favourite resorts, or on their journeys, they speedily glide into a latitude and climate all their own. What goes on when *women* are together in their feminine realm it is not given to mere man to know: his pretentious guesses are declared to be wide of the mark. Certainly when men have the freedom of their separate male republic, their intercourse takes a manner and an air known only to a man who has mixed with his kind.

Men's
Symposia

There were high times when Charles Lamb and his coterie of kindred spirits exchanged their best, and when the merry men of *Punch* in Leech's day revelled in quips and good fellowship. It is in such choice hours that we are most ourselves. There is scarcely a finer arena for the shaping of one's ideas—'the waves of conversation roll them as the surf rolls the pebbles on the shore'—for sharpening one's observation, for filling up one's

When Men are Together

Tilts and
Liberties

wallet of general knowledge, and for the exercise of courtesy in the tournament of bright contentions. We become accustomed to the give-and-take of minds that think differently, and learn to stand 'chaff' and accept with good humour a 'counter' in the wrestle of wits. The bubbles of the foolish are neatly pricked, and each finds his level.

But some one is wanted who will speak frankly to young men about certain tendencies and dangers which many of us have observed in these symposia. In sketching a few of them—the most serious and delicate last—I am not forgetting that light play and nonsense, and tilts between genial antagonists, come in as a matter of course. Yet, with all the liberties which unwritten law allows, this social exchange and mart has, I claim, its code of honour and its standard of fine taste. And it is the business of every true man to see that the court of common feeling does not permit its ideal of honour and of clean lips to be tampered with.

But to our instances.

Love
Sacro-
sanct

MEN may lightly flick each other with harmless teasing about the heart's affections. But it is intolerable when they go on toying perpetually with love affairs, treating love as though it were a huge joke, and turning what should be held the

When Men are Together

finest essence of the heart into a vulgar plaything. When they carry on free familiar talk about 'girls' and their merits as trainers do about horses, when they assume the money-interest as a prime motive, or grow sarcastic and snigger at married life till it is made to appear a thing to grin at and the whole sacred relationship is tarnished, one's highest instincts are revolted. Hands off those sanctuaries !

When men are together, too, there are often some in the company who assume that they may now freely adopt the shrewd, world-wise tone. They take it for granted that the motives and policy of men of the world are accepted by everybody, no matter what appearances he may keep up before society for prudential reasons. How their clever things have been managed, how their adventurous speculations have turned out, how the wise have been hoodwinked—these and the like are openly told. Even when nothing dishonourable is recommended, the *morale* of the conversation may be so low-pitched, the atmosphere so heavy with world-wise policy, that those of less sophisticated mind who are present have their standard of taste and honour insensibly lowered.

The moral fibre of the innocents is still further relaxed when self-interest is assumed to be every man's guiding rule, and high motives, unselfish offers, and fine sympathies are discounted as so

Debasing
the
Currency

When Men are Together

much gammon or gush, and nothing is left for admiration except cleverness. [‘I believe,’ said Dr Arnold of Rugby, ‘that “Nil admirari” is the devil’s favourite text. And therefore I have always looked upon a man infected with the disorder of anti-romance as one who has lost the finest part of his nature and his best protection against everything low and foolish.’] Such a nipping, cynical air of ‘anti-romance’ may not strike us at the moment as deleterious; it may even appear capitally shrewd and be felt stimulating to one’s keen observation of the inside of human character; but it is about the most poisonous atmosphere that any mortal can breathe, a blight on the spirit of hero-worship and deadly to high ideals.

And your shrewd man of the world deceives himself at the same time as he dismantles manhood. It is a lie that every man has his price, as he may yet live to find out in his day of stress. Men are capable of more nobility than he knows. Men’s talk when together should reflect some faith in high principles and kind hearts.

Confidential Hours COMPANIONABLE talk, again, gives no license for divulging secrets which affect others. There lurks some risk in the flow of confidences when men are secure from listening ears. You have no right—it is a social crime—to give away what you have come to know about an-

When Men are Together

other, even though you have little reason to like him, if it might turn out to his hurt. The law of honour as to the privacy of another's secret affairs or commercial standing has not been annulled because you are confidential with your comrades.

One's own secrets are in equal danger sometimes when good fellowship is warm upon us. 'There are scenes and hours,' said a journalist lately, 'which prompt a man to blab. In certain effects of sunlight and moonlight, in a long nocturnal smoke and palaver, after dinner especially, the skeletons in our cupboards begin to stir, to rattle within us, to desire to show themselves.' There is a pleasure in taking another into our privacies; but regret comes with the morning; we lie at his mercy, and can never feel quite sure that in a confidential mood he also may not blab. Men when together should not only keep a rein on their self-disclosures, but ought to conquer curiosity and the taste for secrets sufficiently to arrest another's tongue when it is ready to tell too much.

TALK unquestionably tends, also, to drift to-wards a region that is under the social ban and specially dangerous. It is not to moral lepers I refer, men who take pleasure in *double entendre* and rakish talk dashed with the glamour of bold freedom. We are sometimes forced unwillingly to

When Men are Together

listen to it. God grant us ears deaf to these things, memories that spit out these baited hooks of wickedness. One of the greatest and best of Edinburgh's citizens has declared that some one's words had imprinted a desecrating image on the walls of his youthful memory which till this day he has been unable to erase.

But, far short of such talk, stories are often related which, if not bad in themselves, take liberties with the proprieties and sanctities of life.

Not for
Ladies'
Ears

'Now that the ladies are gone'—and with that introduction gentlemen at table used to exchange the tales that were counted scarcely suited to delicate feminine ears. Surely a high compliment to womanhood ! Not that everything is unhallowed which cannot naturally be said in woman's society. Some things, right enough in themselves, but special to men's or to women's separate world, cannot appropriately be brought out in mixed company. An instinct tells us what lies within this boundary of the becoming and what oversteps the line.

Why, for example, should it be considered permissible to retail stories seasoned with strong language or shady references when men are apart together if a lady's presence would prohibit them ?

Granted that social convention allows the practice ; respectable church folk and more than

When Men are Together

one noted preacher of whom I know, men of low grain by nature uncured by grace, have been guilty when in safe company ; but is not the social convention a foolish and perilous one ? Why do men laugh so lustily when the story is salted with the devil's name or contains a smack of the unholy or trifles with things commonly held sacred ? Is not that lusty ring in the laugh a confession that it is the liberty taken which tickles and pleases ? When the tale makes free with the Bible, is it not the touch of danger that titillates ?

Men's conversation is, I am sure, generally free from taint, and usually ranges over the open, everyday life and doings of their fellows. Yet as certainly there is at times a ready ear for stories that border on the unsanctified, for witticisms that are cautiously spiced. There is a morbid curiosity, a native interest in things properly screened behind the veil of nature's secrecy, which gives to confidential talk a gravitating tendency towards the subject of sex. The men confabulating may be stainless and free from the unclean mind ; yet, as I have repeatedly noticed, even they are tempted towards whatever is private, liable especially to the fascination of sex interest. Unhappily, too, we cannot but sometimes be with men whose lives are not what they should be, and who have a relish for 'seeing life' and showing how well they 'know the world.'

*Risque
Subjects*

When Men are Together

Whatever may be said about the use of tobacco on its own merits, this every unbiassed smoker will grant, that the real risk attending the practice is the set of men among whom the smoker is liable to be thrown. If he finds himself in smoking-room company—and often there is no other place for him—he may sometimes hear more than enough of things not spoken in ministers' studies or ladies' boudoirs.


The Code
of Honour

MAN to man, let me protest that masculine intercourse is as much under the code of honour and innocence as any other. Talk which brings before the mind a region of life properly veiled as too delicate for common observation is calculated to foster a morbid taste, leave images of evil on the imagination, and whet low proclivities which lie at the animal base of almost every man's nature. Even when there is nothing odious hinted at nor any thought of working mischief, the atmosphere of such a region is unwholesome. Men often breed untold harm without realizing what they are doing, especially when others more innocent-hearted or less experienced and settled in virtue are present.

Burns Where did Robert Burns learn the things which demoralized him? Just, I fear, where so many country-bred youths acquire their unhallowed knowledge—in the farm-kitchens, 'bothies,' and

When Men are Together

barns, and the evening 'howffs' of men. What is responsible for putting evil into the mind of many a spirited, sociable youth—what, in many an instance, but the 'risky' talk of men when together? What numbers receive an evil infection from those who carelessly toy with light references to the shady regions of human life! What devilish fires have been lit in combustible natures by men's suggestive talk! Things which had been held back out of sight by a strong barricade of resolute repression have, when playfully treated in their hearing, over-swept the barrier and carried the weak or innocent away. And, after all, these were perhaps said only to sharpen a witticism or give a story enough piquant seasoning to bring the tribute of a chuckling laugh, or—it is a Scripture phrase—make 'the naughty wink with the eye.' Yet some one present may never get the taste of that seasoning out of his mouth.

Kipling—and he is the writer who reflects the men's world—lends us the words that come home here:

'Their sin it was that fed the fire—small blame to them that heard—
The 'bhoys' get drunk on rhetoric, and madden at
word.
If words are words, or death is death, or powder sends the ball,
You spoke the words that sped the shot—the curse be on you all.'

When Men are Together

Aye, a curse be on whatever takes the bloom off virtue, womanhood, honour, or domestic sweetness. Our anathema on those who, wittingly or unwittingly, are corrupters of youth and innocence. A blight on those who blow a keen, cynical wind on the virgin ideals and fine tastes of clean manhood.

**The
Cour-
teous
Rebuke** Through the dumb printed page let me entreat you younger men to cut clear from company which in the smallest degree takes liberties with the sacred things of the heart and the modesties of life. With perfect good humour, free from the superior air and priggish cant, but with perfect firmness, 'freeze' whatever might despoil the sanctuaries. A smileless silence or a stony look is often more significant than a spoken rebuke, and more likely to take effect on all but the case-hardened. Do we shrink blushing from striking a jarring note in sociable company, and, by pretending to be better than the average fellow, exposing ourselves to ridicule? The blush should burn our cheeks rather if we sit dumb and make no gentlemanly sign that such things are not to our taste.

**'A
Brother
of Girls'** **H**ERE is a sphere for men's chivalry. The chivalry of knightly courtliness towards woman has been sufficiently enshrined in legend and poetry. There is as urgent a call for chivalry towards unsullied virginity of heart and mind in young manhood. 'The Arabs,' said one of their

When Men are Together

number, 'call that man "a brother of girls" to whom God has given a clean heart to look on all women as his sisters and courage to protect them.' Not only a 'brother of girls' but a brother of Christ is the man who helps to shield the unsophisticated from tainting suggestions. What chivalry in Him towards all that was tender, delicate, domestic! How purely He touched the shady side of social life! When the men caught a nameless woman red-handed in her sin and dragged her case before Him (suppose the incident to be historical) He lowered His head and wrote on the ground shamefaced at their dirty story. And if we have His chaste instincts, these will find their own way of showing through, unless we give them the lie.

Much can be done by every man to keep inter-
course on high, manly planes, and to breathe a
wholesome air into the symposium. One can, if
one chooses, lift the level of talk—we have watched
men doing it—bend its direction to fields of
genuine interest where the mind is whetted for its
good. It would be mere wiseacre pedantry to
expect that such sociable chats should regularly be
of the 'improving' order. On the other hand,
what could be more inane than half an evening
occupied upon little nothings about field sports and
popular pleasurings? Men's talk should not for
ever skim the surface of life, but ought at times to

**Feasts of
Mental
Fellow-
ship**

When Men are Together

touch solid ground and strike the note of reality, true feeling and conviction. After making full allowance for light interludes of quizzing and play, what continents there are of human interest where lively and intelligent men can exchange ideas or stroll in leisurely remark! What splendid hours when men open their minds, indulge in a not unprofitable war of words, and bring out their best! In royal times like these you may find half the wealth of life, and add to it. And, without the smallest risk of schoolmastering, you can and should make these informal clubs a stimulus to your higher interests, and give them a sound tone and quality alike in grave and gay.

Gallant Sons

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Typed and
'When the old-time trying of conclusions between age and youth is renewed in the family circle, when the seething young wills rise against the institutions and customs of other days . . . this is just as it ought to be, always on the condition that this juvenile exuberance receives its check. . . . Young people are impulsive, headstrong, yet respectful of gray hair, in the presence of the aged gentle and filial. . . . Doubtless there are old men who do not respect youth, denying it its rights root and branch; in whose eyes it is a sort of imposture to be young; the hunters and slayers of juvenile dreams and stranglers of young hopes. But as truly as a right-minded youth has an innate respect for the old, a right-minded old man would never violate a young conscience or reduce it to slavery.'

—CHARLES WAGNER, 'By the Fireside.'

II

Gallant Sons

IT is easy for young manhood to play the knight Sire and Son :
to comely maidenhood. Such gallantry to Steven-
young life with the fair face is often cheap and son
superficial, and it is no test of a young man's true
mettle. A rarer knightliness it is that shows fine
consideration and pays courtly attentions to the
grey seniors of the home.

Between R. L. Stevenson and his father, it is clear, there were strained relations for many a year ; the former's journey to the Far West among the emigrants of the steerage and 'across the plains' in a colonist car was taken under stress of some such disfavour. The Nestor of Northern light-houses, like other strong men of the older school of Scots, had his own ideas of what his son should be and do ; he had evidently a good deal to bear from the young Bohemian errant ; and, perhaps asking too much from the spirited youth, he got less in return than was due. This single instance stands for a large class of cases in which the relations between the older folk and the sons of the

Gallant Sons

house are very delicate and difficult. The younger generation is often out of sympathy with the older generation, in the household as well as in the state.

Like young Stevenson, the son fails perhaps to lay hold of one line of life, or is hot to take up the rights and liberties of manhood and cut the strings of family control. He goes into strange company, lives in the new world of his own time, and airs his up-to-date ideas. Naturally the father clings to the old ways and hoary ideas. He finds it difficult to allow for the 'boys' having grown up, and sometimes he expects to keep them of one mind and step with him, in spite of the differences in age and education and changing times. He is perhaps out of humour with the young world because it has gone away from him; he has fallen out of the life of the new times, and must 'move on' and give place to the younger generation which, as Ibsen puts it, is hammering at the doors to assume the place of power.]

There must, of course, be some give-and-take on both sides, if there is not to be unbearable friction and a fatal rift; but I think it lies chiefly with us to pay deference to the seniors, even when we might claim our freedom. Time will settle these things ere very long; youth will soon enough have full independence. When we come and see them in their last sleep, and the rallying-point of the home is broken up, there will be sharp pangs

Gallant Sons

of regret if we have been rudely impatient of them. It is just at this difficult stage of transition from subordination to emancipation that we can display gallantry of the rarest kind.

It is one of the sights that rejoice one's eyes, **Chivalry at Home** and the fair sight is often seen—free and valiant youth chivalrous to those who have borne the burden and heat of the day. I see the loyal son deferring to the older folk's wishes, taking their slow pace, sharing his best news with them, lending himself to them to be cared for although he is of full stature. They hunger to find a second and vicarious life in him, and he strives to give them the happiness of seeing him develop and succeed. On coming home he goes first to the sickly prisoner of the upper room, and if possible brings some token to make them proud of his thoughtfulness or his advancement. In many such ways he fills their faces with quiet content.

Ruskin comes to one's mind for the beautiful **Ruskin's Case** way in which he bore himself to his parents in the Denmark Hill home—'among the most beautiful things that dwell in my memory,' writes Mr Harrison in his monograph. 'Towering as he did by his genius above his parents, who neither understood nor sympathised with his second career (dating from *Unto this Last*), he invariably behaved towards them with the most affectionate deference. He submitted without murmur to the rule of the

Gallant Sons

Parents
John & George
house, which, on the Sabbath day, covered his beloved Turners with dark screens. This man, well past middle life, in all the renown of his principal works, who for a score of years had been one of the chief forces in the literature of the century, continued to show an almost childlike docility towards his father and his mother, respecting their complaints and remonstrances, and gratefully submitting to be corrected by their worldly wisdom and larger experience.' In many cases, I admit, such an exchange of minds on high levels is impracticable; yet, even on your own level, you can bring home your triumphs as a crown for those who have waited on your development, and can throughout all changing fortunes carry yourself towards them with courtly consideration.

Eager for the Fray **I**T is no small sign of grace. The younger man hears the call of his comrades, and feels the throb of his own world with its personal ambitions and enchantments, which the seniors cannot share with him. They may almost forget what it is to be young and a-tingle with vitality and the thirst for life. They may not realise at all what it costs him to slow down to the pace of their step and their mind. Some of them demand more than is rightly due, cannot bear the young out of their sight, or are impatient with the son for not getting

Gallant Sons

on faster in his career. Certainly the young are often 'trying'; but it is not usually acknowledged that the older folk may be equally 'trying' to youth in their own fashion.

Adam Bede's mother is a type of numbers who wear out the patience of the young by perpetual 'worritting' or by peevish complainings over domestic vexations and the apparent frailties and neglects of youth. Sometimes they may bore you with meandering recollections of olden days, and perhaps their fidgety or gnarled 'ways' are exasperating. But you must not expect them to grow out of these little ways of theirs now; in any case there is a lighter and happier method of delivering yourself from their old-world maze than by brusque interruptions and rough handling.

Some young folk have to give up their plans and careers for life, or their marriage prospects, for the sake of the old, as Charles Lamb gave up the thought of his Agnes in order to devote himself to his decrepit father and oft-insane sister. But is it not this heroic self-suppression in combination with his humour and genius that has helped to make Charles Lamb the beloved of thousands until this day? If you have achieved the great triumph over yourself, you will make as light as possible of the sacrifice which you have been compelled to make and prove yourself a gallant son.

The Drag
of Age

Charles
Lamb
Heroic

It was Charles Lamb himself who dedicated one

Gallant Sons

of his books to his afflicted sister for whose sake he had made many a heavy sacrifice. 'When people are living together day by day,' he says, 'they are too apt to take for granted the affection they bear each other, and to forget those special expressions of affection that are the gauge of its true and constant depth.' And so he takes occasion to pay, in the dedication, that tribute of attachment which is liable to be overlooked in the bustle of the routine life. If he could be so chivalrous to one whose recurring malady brought him such distress, there is scarcely any domestic relationship in which you cannot bear yourself with magnanimous consideration to those with whom you live.

It is a pitiful sight that one sees when the younger people regard the seniors as a burden, a bore, ■ chafing curb, or snap at them with gruff cavalier answers, or lord it over them indifferent to their feelings and the honour that is due, or treat the proper rules of the home as to hours and meals with cool disregard, or *use* them to supply the means with which to take their pleasure in the world.

Dr Johnson's Dr Samuel Johnson stands with bared head in
Amende the open market of Uttoxeter, as a sort of belated
Honorable reparation for his discourtesy to his father when he
was a youth in that town. It is a typical picture
of the shame that comes over a man when he re-

Gallant Sons

members, not so much his little faults, as how rudely impatient and inconsiderate he was of those who had a right to his honour and a return for all their care. We have to consider that we are the better part of their world and wealth, and to think of what they have lost—they have lost their children. We may be all here alive ; yet they have lost their children, the little ones they used to watch asleep with a kind of sacred hush of smiling love. It is one of their pains that they cannot 'mother' us as they used to do, and the only substitute to their hearts is that we should 'mother' them in a sort of grown-up manly way !

The late P. G. Hamerton, in his *Human Intercourse*, gives a moving description of the complex and often difficult relations between fathers and sons. 'The best satisfaction,' he says, 'for a father is to deserve and receive loyal and unfailing respect from his son. No, this is not quite the best, not quite the supreme satisfaction of paternity. Shall I reveal the secret that lies in silence at the very bottom of the hearts of all worthy and honourable fathers? Their profoundest happiness is to be able to respect their sons.'

It is the best of human crowns when we feel humbly that the older folk are quietly proud of us and pleased to hear our names mentioned. If we have been prospering and winning honours, those are great days when we bring home our crowns

Proud
Parents

Gallant Sons

and cast them at the old folk's feet, as the student from Drumtochty did to Margaret Howe. What an admirable picture that is also: the *Little Minister* conducting his mother up the garden walk to the Manse which he has won and which he loves because it is now to be her palace in her weary years.

I know well how some young fellows smile or jest at this sort of thing as over-done sentimentality; and, indeed, a false and repellent note may be given to it. But, as for everything of the sort being unmanly, have we often had a manlier, braver man than General Garfield? And he, when he was installed as President of the United States, took care that his old mother, who had shared the hardships of the log-cabin with him, should be seated at his side before the great assembly, and, when the ceremony was over, he turned and kissed her before all eyes. It was the sacrament that hallowed all the years they had shared in common toils and struggles, a kiss that blossomed into a crown on an old mother's brow. Is there any young dry-hearted cynic of the world who will dare to say that such loyal sentiment is not wholesome and the true grace of manly character? 'I wish,' wrote Stevenson to his father, 'I wish I might become a man worth talking of, if it were only that you should not have thrown away your pains.' The father saw that day, and there came to be friendly confidence between father and son before

Gallant Sons

the former died. It was left to the mother to enjoy Tusitala's most chivalrous devotion till the day he passed.

Gallant sons will rally to the assistance of 'the old folk at home' when they are weary and failing under the weight of narrow circumstances. John Lamb, brother of the gentle essayist, left Charles to bear the whole burden of the home and the afflicted sister, and bought bric-à-brac to please his fancy, generous with nothing save good advice. There is something which no parliamentary words are strong enough to characterize in the conduct of lusty fellows who hang on elderly strugglers. I know some such young men who go first-class when father and mother are pinched, squeeze them for what they want, and take advantage of their forbearance and kind hearts. What gallant fellows I know of, on the other hand, who have stood up to the world and fought with unwincing, unostentatious pluck and industry in order to ease the old folk's lot and bring out the family name with credit at the end. It is nothing that they may not ask it of you: seeing the need should be enough to make you leap to the task. The brave endeavour will do much to build you up in stronger character and make bigger men of you.

David Livingstone's public fame never abated his pride in his godly parents and humble home. There is a noble glory in the epitaph on their tombstone:—

The
Chord
of Self

The
Living-
stones'
Pride

Gallant Sons

'To show the resting-place of
Neil Livingstone,
And Agnes Hunter, his wife,
And to express the thankfulness to God
of their children
John, David, Janet, Charles and Agnes
for poor and pious parents.'

Those who are not ashamed but proud of such ancestry—it is of them that both God and men are not ashamed.

Marriage
and Old
Ties

WHEN a son rises and marries into a better social class, what is to be his bearing to the old people of his humbler home? One does not forget what sacrifices it may mean for his young mate; but she is not worthy of him, and he is not worth naming with one's breath, if the change shuts out the old and dear from unabated filial interest. I know one man who made such a marriage, and, as he prospered, he made another home for her with the wrinkled face, and still he and his own make it their second home. But I also know one who made such a match, and she hectored and ruled her old mother and tumbled her about because she was under obligations to her uplifted daughter; the one has gone to her rest with a weary heart, but the other will not make much of a blank in people's affections when she departs hence.

Gallant Sons

The situation is liable to become very difficult when the young grow up to think for themselves on religious matters, when, especially, the son departs from the older folk's faith in the direction of no belief or of over-belief. There is no denying the cleavage. In such a case the younger man may feel compelled sorrowfully to give dear ones a sore heart. Yet a fine chivalrous grace may do much to soften the blow. On the principles of John Morley's *Compromise*, he may shrink from a sham conformity that would belie his convictions. But he will be slow to break away, will minimize the differences and dwell on the common ground, and, as far as imperious conscience will allow, will bow with the rest at home prayers and in the family pew.

When
Minds
Divide

Carlyle, who was in just such a case, succeeded in keeping the good-feeling and confidence between the old folk at Ecclefechan and himself intact and unabated. They knew him to be true-hearted; and he on his part could never lose reverence for their brave sterling godliness and their sublime religion. At the bottom they still felt one. Bitterly otherwise was it with young Shelley and his father, who, when his son was expelled from Oxford, shut him out from the home. Occasional visits to the old knight's castle never healed the breach, and each was the worse for this lack of mutual devotion.

The
Carlyles

Gallant Sons

Carlyle and his stone-mason father also represent another trying condition, namely, when the young are highly educated and the seniors have had imperfect schooling and lack culture. But right-minded youth will overlook that lack—if there be no low-bred tone to make it impracticable—and take delight in their shrewd sense or sturdy character. Such homely folk have often a strong natural intelligence or a gift of observation and sound judgment which is sufficient basis for an exchange of minds; and always kind hearts go far to make up for defects in education and style. Carlyle proved this true, and could write, at the close of his *Reminiscences*: ‘Thank Heaven, I know and have known what it is to be a son and to love a father as spirit can love spirit. God give me to live to my father’s honour and to His!’

In the mature and famous man the child’s heart in Carlyle harks back to the early home when he cries: ‘Oh, pious mother, kind, good, brave and truthful soul as I have ever found in this world, your poor Tom has fallen very lonely, very lame and broken in this pilgrimage of his; and you cannot help or cheer by a kind word any more. But from your grave in Ecclefechan Kirkyard yonder you bid him trust in God; and that also he will try to do, for the conquest of the world, and of death and hell, does verily lie in that.’

Gallant Sons

Tens of thousands of young men in cities are in rooms and in warehouses 'living in,' and it is easy to live loose without family eyes watching and showing looks of pain. But the loyal pilgrimage homeward whenever you have 'leave,' and the loyal letter each week, should come in among other saving ties. Write even the little nothings of your life. Such nothings may seem not worth setting down; but they are meat and drink to anxious, brooding hearts. That letter should be a sort of second conscience and regular test of your drift.

You will not—please God, you will not—neglect the God of your fathers, nor, though you live in new times with modern minds, ever forget the secret of their lives, the beautiful Christian faith which made them honest, enduring, god-fearing men and women. You will not, you cannot, lose the touch of the soft or the strong hands laid lingeringly on your heads. You have it in your power to make their steps heavy with heart-break, so that they are half-ashamed to be seen, and afraid lest some long-absent returning friend shall ask about you. But you can also send a flush of happiness through their hearts and become the crown of their own unfulfilled lives and hopes.

A gallant soldier and a gallant lover are the idols of the public heart. Romeo, however, may be gallant to Juliet, and yet may cruelly neglect her when she has been twenty years his wife. But the

Away
from
Home

The
Crown
of Age

Gallant Sons

young man who shows knightly devotion to the elder folk may be relied on to love his life's companion to the end and make an Indian summer of her autumn years. There is one glory of the pure and gallant love of a man and a maid for each other. There is another and greater glory in their love when they are old, and it grows more tender and mellow as they near the journey's end. But a greater glory still it is when 'the glory of children are their fathers.'

Vows of the Outward Bound

*'For so thou pass
Beneath this archway, then thou wilt become
A thrall to his enchantments, for the King
Will bind thee by such vows, as is a shame
A man should not be bound by, yet the which
No man can keep.'*

—TENNYSON'S 'Idylls of the King.'

III

Vows of the Outward Bound

ONE of the moving sights of the world is seen, **Outward Bound**
any week, on board our steamers outward bound. You can look with indifferent eyes on the usual specimens of the mercantile, military, and globe-trotting fraternity. But, if you have an imaginative eye for human life, you are fascinated as you look down from the upper deck on the motley collection of voyagers—young men pushing out adventurously into the wide world to forge their fortune abroad, maidens on the way to marry men awaiting them in the foreign port, sturdy sons of industry making their big venture and bid for bettered prospects, failures of the old world and hard-visaged fugitives from tyrannous governments risking everything for liberty. What a study in faces—some radiant with young life, others stolidly weary, but all wistfully looking forward with eyes of hope! You foresee them scattering over a continent—Canada, South Africa, the East—and finding themselves among the chances and temptations of a new world. How will they stand the

Vows of the Outward Bound

ordeal? Will the pledges and vows which they have made to themselves or to some one else abide and hold them?

The
Romance
Abroad

Go West, or go East—

‘ East of Suez,
Where the best is like the worst,
Where there aint no Ten Commandments,
And a man can raise a thirst,’

or go, as thousands go every month, from the country to our great cities, and you first enjoy the romance of new sensations and then find yourself in the ordeal of fire. The glamour of everything new, the new atmosphere, the different style of life and ways of men, and the remoteness of the old, slow, sedate world, all tend to loosen the heart from former restraints and to breed a lush delight in the feeling of emancipation.

Do as
Rome
does?

With natural *camaraderie*, hating to be counted peculiar, will you ‘do in Rome as Rome does’? It is no easy matter to be on terms of good fellowship with other men in the same ‘house’ and never join them in their evening haunts. The clever and attractive fellows are often gifted in the art of enveloping a jovial or sporting life with innocent charm. How about Sunday-keeping? If you take some liberties with the old restrictions, will it stop at a ‘run’ or a ‘row’ for hygienic purposes and not land you in idling and refreshing where easy morals prevail?

Vows of the Outward Bound

The climate in hot countries tempts not only to luxurious lotus-eating, but to new ideas about religion and morality. The specious plea is made that the old Ten Commandments, the hundred customary laws of behaviour familiar at home, cannot be expected to bind men living where the temperature is ninety-five in the shade—as though the standard of morality varied with the latitude! And these mixed peoples of this new world, some of them as devoutly following their own different religious practices as we follow ours—will they gradually make you grandly cosmopolitan in your ideas, weaken your traditional beliefs, and relax your hold on your own religion? God help you, for many a fine fellow has ‘reverted to type’ and become gaily pagan in these new scenes where there are few to look with sentinel mother-eyes on your ways of living and plenty to bear you company and none to tell upon you if you follow wandering fires!

Home-birds have scarcely any idea of the real temptations of those who sing the ‘Song of the Open Road’ and find themselves in the ‘wide-open’ city. And they can scarcely be sure of their mettle and principle until they are out in the world and tested alone.

Go, at the very outset, and link yourself at once with the church and domestic or other protective associations which help to hold and interest you

The
Pagan
Climate

Safe-
bind,
Safe-find

Vows of the Outward Bound

and fill up your life. The battle is generally won or lost at the very beginning. Bravely start by laying yourself under the sacred and softening influences of the old worship and by taking up the ties that will keep you in touch with home and cherished loves. Let a man who has experienced life abroad in various lands of the world entreat you, as man to man, to remember and renew your vows and absolutely distrust and bear down your recalcitrant moods.

Farewell
to Home

A JAUNTY air was put on that day when each mother's son left, outward bound, for the city or abroad. Yet he remembers the last look on certain faces, the hearty cheer given by his comrades, the last possible signal waved to train or steamer. Those honest eyes are still following him and picturing his doings.

Private interviews and sacred family scenes took place, solemn vows and pledges were given and taken, the night before he left. That night, or the last Sabbath evening at home (if the good old custom of family worship was kept) it was, I warrant, at the 28th chapter of Genesis that the Big Bible was opened, where they all heard again how Jacob went out from his father's house, how he fared the first night he spent away from home, how a convoy of angels bore him company, how God pledged Himself to be the traveller's guardian,

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and how *he* in turn pledged himself to the God of his fathers at the break of day. And, if they sang together, it was the old hymn they struggled through :

‘O God of Bethel, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed |
Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led :

Our vows, our prayers, we now present
Before Thy throne of grace :
God of our fathers ! be the God
Of their succeeding race. . . .

O spread Thy covering wings around,
Till all our wanderings cease,
And at our Father’s loved abode
Our souls arrive in peace.’

What the prayer was—halting, broken, yet confidently committing body and soul to Heaven’s care—not one of them can remember ; but none can ever forget the baptising, consecrating, sacramental impression it left.

Incidents of travel and the interest of his new world soon shake off the sentiment of that hour—
for a season ; but there come other hours when his thoughts hark back and the sweet savour of the scene is felt as keenly as ever. The one critical question now is—will he bow at that same altar when away from home, at the outset make

Wistful
Memory

Vows of the Outward Bound

the great vow of his life, pledge himself to God and virtue, and foresee himself climbing the stairway, like Jacob's, that leads both to success and to the heaven set among the idyllic dreams of his young imagination?

Watts'
Aspirations

G. F. WATTS has perhaps depicted him in painting 'Aspirations'—the young knight, equipped for the fight, his soul-full countenance alight with foregleams of the strenuous life he means to live, as though he said :

'Fool not ; for all may have,
If they dare try, a glorious life or grave.'

Starting well, poor perhaps in means but rich in the credit of good character and others' confidence, followed by breezes of blessing, it is the fit time for him to dream dreams, to build castles of hope which, God helping him, he will yet realise and erect, to make promises to himself by night and seal them in the morning. At this impressionable time of fateful beginnings, let him be entreated, by all that he holds dear, to go farther and plight himself frankly beyond recall as a committed disciple of Christ, and become sealed of the tribe of Jesus.

These sacramental hours of transition and stirred emotion should and will, if anything will, give birth to a vow, registered in heaven. It is

Vows of the Outward Bound

the very moment to make settled terms of humble trust and heroic friendship with Christ, to take Him as the one reliable guardian and guide, and to crystallise fluid purposes of noble endeavour in an outward seal or sacrament.

Or had the outward-bound made a bad start at home, and is he off to start clear and make good use of his second chance and retrieve his name and fortune?

'Send him to the Colonies,' is the unthinking, desperate counsel lightly given to parents sorely tried by the son who has got into trouble and bad habits. To have him 'shipped' and thrown upon his own resources is a wickedly easy way of getting rid of the domestic quandary. It may, indeed, be the saving of him, if he has the right mettle in him and a new heart. But let there be no purblind complacency on the matter. He will find himself surrounded by as many temptations as ever. In the raw township or the foreign port to which he goes there are other men of the same type with the same story. He is detached from the old restraining influences, and he can do wrong with impunity more easily than he could at home.

Oliver Wendell Holmes said: 'Travellers change their guineas but not their character.' All depends on the clean cut with the past and the very first stand made in the new environment. What a

'Send Him to the Colonies'

A New Start

Vows of the Outward Bound

turmoil of feeling boils in the breast of the Jacobs who have had to leave home owing to their failures ! Is it only stormy, sullen vexation with their 'luck,' with occasional waves of regret and volatile self-confidence ? Hope, young hope, must certainly be theirs, and they do well to crush down vain recriminations that might paralyse them, and take up life from this point as a new and clean account. But there must be something more thorough and divine than the light-minded and flimsy self-confidence that comes so easily to the sanguine sons of folly.

**A Pilgrim
of the
Night** The standing archetype of this class of men felt as though, now he was out and away from his friends, he was set loose from the God of his fathers. In the wide-open, pagan world, are not the old divinities out of account ? The night falls dark about him ; the hills sleep in solemn, silent grandeur ; and, with no tender good-night, he lays himself down on the hard pillow of stone which his folly has made for his head. Alone with his thoughts—thoughts that perhaps gnaw and fret—he feels pretty desolate.

His symbolic dream is one of the great pictures ever fresh in our gallery of imagery. With his skin-coat over his face, so that 'the moon shall not smite him by night,' he is by and by asleep. It may be a hill-slope and the rocks on the steep before him that lend a base for his dream, working

Vows of the Outward Bound

themselves into a vision of a stony stairway which, at the summit, touches the stars. The celestial world broods low about him, the White Ones busily ascending and descending on that ladder connecting earth with heaven. The voice that he hears—observe—answers his thoughts and forecast: ‘I am the God of your fathers’—of Abraham the pilgrim-father, and of Isaac—‘and I am with *you* also, and will keep you in all places whither you may go, and will bring you back to this land again; for I will not leave you till I have done that which I have spoken to you of.’

‘Sleeping to see,’ he makes the discovery that the touch and power of holy things cannot be lost by mere migration, that God is besetting him behind and before and laying His hand upon him. The misdemeanour which makes him a fugitive and which had threatened to cast him like a heathen among heathen is not able to separate him from the white celestial things of his early faith.

It is terrible to feel that one is cut off, that we are left to our own devices, that those behind us will go on with their songs and loves and festal triumphs, and that we shall have no share in their great hours but shall be left out of account. Well for us if our eyes are opened to see that we are not ‘out of it,’ that there is an open door and a way for us up to the highest, that God can make something good out of us yet, and, like the sun

The
Celestial
Convoy

Cut
Loose

Vows of the Outward Bound

and moon that are with us, will bear us company everywhere.

Bethel
Haunted Ladder

T William Hazlitt said: 'In the days of Jacob there was a ladder between heaven and earth; but now the heavens are gone farther off and are become astronomical.' That may be our first feeling; but no, in spite of our thought of the heavens having become astronomical, even in spite of disenchanting errors, the sensitive heart, bred in Christ's school, has its own skies and mystic influences.

'And still the soul a far-off glory sees,
Strange music hears.
A something, not of earth, still haunts the breeze,
The sun and spheres.

All things that be, all thought, all love, all joy
Spell-bind the man
As once the growing boy,
And point afar—

Point to some land of hope and crystal truth,
Of life and light,
Where souls renewed in an immortal youth
Shall know the infinite.'

That ladder has ceased to be astronomical and has become flesh. The ascending and descending blessings and communications linking heaven with our hearts are now 'upon the Son of Man'; by Him come down those white thoughts and forces of grace which prove God near, and by Him we

Vows of the Outward Bound

climb to God's feet. You cannot throw off the leash of his Spirit.

VOWS are the fitting issue of these hours of **Vows** vision, wistfulness, and detachment. The Hebrew archetype, hushed with awe on awaking, erects his stone-pillow like a cromlech, pours the oil of consecration on it, makes it the trysting-place with God for some future day, and 'vows a vow.'

We naturally shrink from vows, partly because we dislike binding ourselves for the future.

Mr Chesterton has 'A Defence of Rash Vows' in one of his books, whimsical yet deep-seeing. 'A man who makes a vow makes an appointment with himself at some distant time or place. The danger is that himself will not keep' the appointment. And in most times this terror of one's self, of the weakness and mutability of one's self, has perilously increased, and is the real basis of the objection to vows of any kind. . . . In other words, we fear that by that time he will be, in the common but hideously significant phrase, "another man."

**Rash
Vows :
Mr
Chesterton**

True; and you cannot part with your manhood's freedom of action under conditions which you cannot foresee; if *then* you see from some lofty ground that your duty is different, you cannot be a slave to the 'dead hand.' But, in most cases,

Vows of the Outward Bound

what you are timidly providing for in keeping yourself uncommitted is your freedom to yield to reactionary fluctuations of mind and mood. And it is just against these seasons of slackness and the backwash of feeling that a man should forearm himself by fixed and inviolable pledges.

Plighted
Love

In betrothal and marriage do not the man and the maid ennoble themselves by plighting their troth and binding themselves? 'The revolt against vows,' adds Mr Chesterton, 'has been carried in our day even to the extent of a revolt against the typical vow of marriage. It is most amusing to listen to the opponents of marriage on this subject. They appear to imagine that the ideal of constancy was a yoke mysteriously imposed by the devil, instead of being, as it is, a yoke imposed by lovers on themselves. They have invented a phrase that is a black-and-white contradiction in two words—"free-love"—as if a lover ever had been, or ever could be, free. It is of the nature of love to bind itself, and the institution of marriage merely paid the average man the compliment of taking him at his word.'

Safe
against
Reaction

To keep a back-door as a convenient retreat from virtuous and pious living is to lay yourself superfluously open to temptation and invite a fall. Pledging yourself deep when under the baptism of some sacred impression, you are fortifying yourself against the treacherous tides of emotional reaction.

Vows of the Outward Bound

Does it look like a demeaning confession of your possible weakness at some future time? But it is only a sensible recognition of the fact that the highest impressions are apt to fade and the turn of the tide of impulse to end in worldly drift; and so you bind yourself as a defence against your times of weakness and recoil. (Few of us can wisely trust ourselves without these bonds of love and devotion, yokes perhaps, but yokes that are stays. Like a ship in the ocean fogs when a rift in the fog gives a brief glimpse of the stars, we see clear in some tense moment and take our bearings, and then follow the line marked out through the dull and unilluminated hours. In Charles Kingsley's words:

'I'll bind myself to that which, once being right,
Will not be less right when I shrink from it.'

Betrothed in true love, you are pledged to one of your heart's choice, and then wicked eyes and charms have no appeal to you. By the same law, become deeply and gloriously committed to Christ, make your solemn covenant with God in the hour of sacred impression, and your vow will give you fixity and stability of purpose, and will save you from your worse self. Many a dart of the evil one drops cold from your shield when you are plighted to Christian honour and purity.

The pledged abstainer may be accused of self-distrust and the surrender of his liberty; but he has 'gain to match.' When asked to drink with

The
Defensive
Ring

Vows of the Outward Bound

those who drink, he is not liable to sway and argue with himself whether he may not this once do ■
Settled Issues others do for good fellowship. It is a settled issue, and when—always with good humour—he frankly avows his principle, men respect him in their hearts, whatever harmless banter they may indulge in for a moment. So, in still greater matters, many a quibble of the mind is settled in advance by your complete self-committal to the Christian life, and thus you are well defended against the easy lapse of a relaxed mood.

Many a foolish vow has been made in a highly-strung moment; but give me the man who vows and sometimes fails to his shame rather than the cold and phlegmatic man who escapes such shame by never pledging himself deep to heroic love or moral ideals or the holy Christian life.

Broken Pledges The cynically wise are ready by our side with ■ mocking leer at the futility of pledges, and he can find only too many weapons from past failures with which to prick our confidence; yet is he the devil none the less. Are there broken vows at your feet? Yet, poorly as you have succeeded, it would have gone many times worse with you if you had not thus solemnly addressed yourself to the ideal. After you have turned over a new leaf, the new page has its fresh stains; but your undertaking is a tonic and spur that keep you striving and salt you and preserve a soul alive in you. And

Vows of the Outward Bound

I dare to say that he who staggers striving after the ideal life, even though he fail, is not himself utterly lost to good and God ; that striving spirit is still an asset in the All-wise Eye.

‘It’s of no use,’ say some after their early **Re-made** failures ; ‘I must dree my ain weird and play out the game as it has begun.’ But it *is* of use. Many a man of good standing to-day was braced by his failures when outward-bound ; many a man successfully ‘pulled himself together,’ and, like Jacob the errant, became, after his sifting discipline, a prince and power. Avert your ear from the demon-critic who would nip your better mind ; and bind yourself by all the domestic and religious ties available to the things that save and make a man. Believe greatly, and life and God will answer to your faith and hope. Accept and openly wear the ring of discipleship that wards off temptation and keeps you safely heart-bound.

The Taming of Wild Life

D

'We need impulsive forces, impatient of yokes and curbs, disposed to take risks, for whom a hazard of fortunes has no terrors, and whom danger allures. The fires of the world would have gone out through prudence and calculation, if each new generation had not brought us its contingent of fine temerity.'

—CHARLES WAGNER.

'A man so trained in his youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that as a mechanism it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold logic-engine with all its parts of equal strength and in smooth working order . . . one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself.'

—HUXLEY.

IV

The Taming of Wild Life.

THERE is a wild and voracious element in the <sup>Over-
charged
with Life</sup> blood when our veins are full of the health of youth. The Powers that sent us here have stoked our young natures with an overplus of combustible materials, and have not forgotten the fire. It is not of Shelley and Mademoiselle Bashkirtseff I speak; such natures are much too rank and tropical to be normal types. But we cannot be strong in human nature without being more or less driven by clamorous powers and hungry passions. They make a young man restless, intolerant, impatient at youth's long waiting, sometimes irritable, often impetuous and unsteady. They fill his mind with curiosity that itches to penetrate all screens and know all human secrets. They wake in some an intellectual inquisitiveness that dares to speculate on subjects held sacrosanct by the wise. They make him proclaim theories of impossible social reform, or greedy of fame or power. They send him experimenting in dangerous regions of life.

The Taming of Wild Life

His imagination flings its own colour over the whole untried world, and his firelit fancies run to meet and glorify temptation. And often his offences are errors into which he blunders through sheer force of natural animal instinct which has not yet been tamed. He is like an engine standing ready for its long run, so much steam escaping with deafening hiss that it seems unable to contain itself.

**The Sur-
plus
Wanted** These wild energies—why should young manhood be so overcharged with them and its safety and career put in peril? They must certainly be tamed if the man's life is not to be devoured by them—and how the taming is commonly done we must see forthwith. But they will all be needed before life's work is overtaken. They are the forces required to impel the engine and drive the train over its long journey.

Emerson To adapt Emerson's language, with that overweight of passions, nature secures the execution of her aims. 'To perfect the commissariat, she implants in each a certain rapacity to get the supply, and a little oversupply, of his wants. To ensure the existence of the race, she enforces the sexual instinct, at the risk of disorder, grief, and pain. To secure strength, she plants cruel hunger and thirst, which so easily overdo their office and invite disease. . . . We live in youth amidst this rabble of passions.' These wild energies do bring us into grave dangers; but they supply the on-

The Taming of Wild Life

going power for life and ought to be in excess at the start.

'To lift too high,' said old Thomas Fuller, 'is no fault in a young horse, because with travelling he will mend it for his own ease. Thus lofty fancies in young men will come down of themselves, and in process of time the surplus will shrink to but even measure.'

These hot energies, which are his peril, will help to make the man, if the manhood in him has mastery over the beast. They not only feed the proper ambitions which incite men to greatness, but they are even a good 'basement' on which the strongest and saintliest characters may be reared.

'Michel Angelo's head,' wrote the seer of Concord, 'is full of masculine and gigantic figures as gods walking, which make him savage until his furious chisel can render them into marble. There is the like tempest in every good head in which some great benefit for the world is planted. Every faculty new to each man thus goads him and drives him.' His powers may become the wrecking of him; but, if he learns to subdue and use them, they will be the making of him. And the natural passions, if trained and tamed, go towards the making of the grandest moral character and the very man of God.

Luther was all the greater as God's 'hammer' because of the vehement animal element in his

Michel
Angelo
Furiosus

Hot
Saints

The Taming of Wild Life

blood. Santa Teresa burned with intense natural feelings, which, when mastered, turned to power and made her the more intense and conquering as a saint.

The
Animal
Tamed

BUT the taming of hot nature—that is the ordeal. Does each young man see that this is his first task in life? Do not argue that God has charged you with these animal appetites, and why, if He has planted them, are they not to be indulged? God has given you something else at the same time—a will and a moral instinct by which you are able to restrain these impulses. Have you not a will? That is, or may be made, a force as strong as the might of natural desire. You have fine intuitions which tell you you are cheating yourself when you plead animal cravings as an excuse for self-indulgence. God has endowed you with powers by which to tame and conquer these baser energies, and turn them to the service of a man's true work.

The taming of our young lions is best done when they are caught fairly early in life and yoked to good hard work. It is not in coltish human nature to leave off frisking in the field and enjoy being harnessed and forced to tramp the mill-course of routine-duty. At first, indeed, we are delighted to enter the great thronged human arena, for is it not splendid to be a man

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and have a share in the company and enterprises of men? But ere long the novelty wears off, and we find ourselves yoked and driven by stern laws of human toil. We have to submit to the will of our masters and accept the humdrum grind and irksome monotony of our apprenticeship to life. We have to 'grind' and to sweat our brains in studies for our profession, or do the hackwork or the run-and-carry drudgery of the office or the warehouse. We feel power in our veins, and clamour for greater outlet for our energies; but it is up the furrow and down again, dragging the same weight turn after turn. This would not much matter if it were speedily over; but promotion is slow, the market is crowded, and young men must wait. It is no great wonder if you champ the bit that holds you fast and are restive from the very vehemence of your natural heat.

Yet it is just in this fashion a young man's fiery forces are sobered and turned into sterling, invaluable power. His tumultuous energies are so much capital to the good in his equipment, excellent materials out of which to make a strong man. But, if left undisciplined, they would carry him off his feet or dissipate themselves in turbulent vanities. His eager ambitions would tempt him to leap into honours which would make him heady or into responsibilities for which he would be unfit for lack of preparatory apprenticeship. His

Manhood
in the
Mill

The Taming of Wild Life

rampant powers must be drilled and regulated, and he is 'in the mill' for the very purpose.

Dickens Charles Dickens was restless with powers which he did not understand when he was perched on an office stool and set to do work that went sharply against the grain. But he vouched for it, 'My imagination would never have served me as it has, but for the habit of common-place, humble, patient, daily, toiling, drudging attention.' And many a citizen, prominent as a merchant or a professional man, could say he has attained his position only by having been well tamed at regular tasks of industry. With all his brimming powers, a youth is of little real value until he has acquired what an American writer calls the fundamentals and indispensables of character (as distinguished from its graces), self-mastery, attention, method, accuracy, the working habit.

Wild Ability I could tell the story—too sacredly private to be related here—of one of the most brilliant young men I ever encountered, who was a clever journalist and had the power and the chance to win distinction, but now lies in a nameless grave, having done little but waste his life and break a saint's heart. I saw him in all conditions, and had his confessions. Drink came to be indispensable to him, and the worst habits ensnared him; but the root of the evil lay neither in a taste for drink nor in vicious propensities. It was his

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ruin that he had no taming apprenticeship to steady industry. His head seethed with faculty and ideas; he felt he had powers and could out-strip the poor plodders whenever he liked; he was not bad at heart—the mention of her with the saint's white face always melted him. But he fumed at the bonds of daily drudgery, and the wild element had not been tamed in the mill.

The taming of Samson—to take an ancient instance—makes a tragic story. The 'Sunny' one, as we are told his name means, with exuberant fighting blood leaping in his veins, brimming with sportive daring spirits, how he delighted in wild, playful escapades! But with a lion's energy he had lionlike passions, and we know the end of him—shorn, his eyes put out, and led away to grind in the prison mill. But few have noticed, 'howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.' The strength and the old heroic spirit came back. No doubt the prison work brought him to his senses, gave him time for reflection, and cooled his hot blood. It was in the mill that he was tamed and sobered. How much better if he had been 'in the mill' and tamed before his wild spirit played the mischief with his life! Unhappily there are many who indulge the lion so long that it cannot be tamed.

**Samson
in the
Mill**

A woman sometimes, filled with heroic love, binds herself to a man whom she knows to have

The Taming of Wild Life

Woman's Taming Power been 'wild,' and undertakes to tame him. She has power over him ; she knows how good he is at heart ; and she will make him worthy of himself and win love's double prize. In rare instances the chivalrous effort succeeds. At the best it is a hazardous venture. Most frequently there is failure, with disaster to two lives. Sometimes a man who has spent his fires 'tames down' and offers his affections to innocent maidenhood. He may make a faithful and dutiful husband ; but what amount of heart's essence has he to give her ? The spent fires have left little but the grey ashes of love. He is tamed only because spent, and therefore not tamed at all.

Divine Mastery I am not forgetting what can be done by way of subduing wild energies through the descent of the Divine power which works by love. There are more men than we know on whom Christ's good Spirit has wrought this change. He puts ■ new spirit in their veins, which turns their heat and ambitions into a sacred passion for human well-being and Christian service. There is no subduing like His ; and, if you turn whole-heartedly to Him and yield the reins into His hand, He will subdue what you alone cannot subdue in yourself. Yet even religious experiences do not annihilate the natural vehemence of strenuous manhood, and require to be supported by the discipline of the mill of life.

The Taming of Wild Life

Some of us, with all that religion has done for us, have been humanly saved to a great extent by just these exhausting tasks of daily duty. If we had been free from them as we wished, we should have run riot. They fretted our necks like yokes; but the yokes became stays and safeguards. The pleasures of life would have intoxicated us, and temptation would have made havoc of our life; but we had our work, which held our thoughts, sobered glowing impulse, solidified what was volatile, and created habits with momentum in them that carried us steadily through the maelstrom of the world. And yet such bonds of labour *may* fail; and in the last and deepest issue nothing but a spiritual power can come and subdue the whole man to God, tame and succour him, and turn his vagrant energies to the highest service.

Charles Lamb, however, used words which warn us of a risk awaiting us when our fires have been subdued. 'Thirty years have I served the Philistines and my neck is not subdued yet.' That is, he was properly proud that, after having been bound down to the desk at the East India House for so long, he was still full of the old exuberant and vital spirit. There is danger that life's taming process will tame the spirit out of us. Some who have become prudently good are sapless and vapid, having lost all the vehemence of nature,

Yokes
become
Stays

Too
Tame

The Taming of Wild Life

and seeking only to slide along their days in secure comfort, undisturbed by impracticable dreams. It is no small disaster when a man who was once quick with wild fires has become lost in this fashion. We don't want to breed creatures so tame and stolid that they have no fine enthusiasm and no great cause at heart. All the natural heat must be preserved, the old fires indeed no longer blazing with mad quixotism, but turned into the steady glow of wise eagerness for good ends.

**The
Burning
Bush** Moses' case shows us how it should be when youth is tamed. When a young man, he saw the cruel wrongs his race were suffering, and struck a wild, reckless blow at one oppressor. It was the mad act of noble youthful impetuosity. Clearly he was a man of hot temper and fiery impatience. Yet he came to be known as the meekest of all men, the most self-restrained and patient. It was during those forty years in the desert, keeping the sheep and studying the skies and his own heart, that his ungovernable heat was cooled and his energies were turned to steady power. Then, when tamed, all his natural force served him splendidly in his great task as general of the migrating horde—a burning bush, not blazing up and dying out, but burning on in steady purpose unconsumed.

Young men's temper, their impatience of conventional forms, their extravagant idealism, and

The Taming of Wild Life

their natural passions, if not wasted, ~~are~~ all materials that can be treated so as to inspire the great principles, the on-going persistence, and the intense and unconquerable faith, which make the truest greatness. The lowest is made to serve the highest; even the animal energies contribute to the making of the man. It is thus, among other ways, that we are 'saved,' nothing human being lost in the man of God.

The Game of Life

"Chance will not do the work.

*Chance sends the breeze ;
But if the pilot slumber at the helm,
The very wind that wafts towards the port
May dash us on the shelves. The steerman's
part is vigilance,
Blow it or rough or smooth.'*

—OLD PLAY.

V

The Game of Life

SPORT has done more than capture the talk of British youth, often to the starving of every other interest. It has imposed its phraseology on Cabinet-making—rival leaders ‘play their cards’; on international diplomacy—in Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim* the secret service in statecraft is called ‘the great game’; and even on war, which has come to be gloated over hilariously like a football field. Must we yield to this masterful fashion and call life *the* Great Game? Even Paul the Hebrew applied the language of wrestling and boxing and the foot-race to the highest of all subjects; and, certainly, life has all the interest of a keen contest and absorbing game. The spirit of battle and the spirit of play unite to give zest to it. Money-kings like Jay Gould kept on playing great stakes in business, not because they wanted more money, but because the battle of wits and the exciting chances had become an exhilarating passion.

It would be well for hosts of Britain’s sons if

The Game of Life

they would take up their life as they take their games. Mark how enthusiastically they give themselves to cricket or football, with brain and eye alert, proud to prove their competence, determined to win, yet equally determined and proud to play a straight and friendly game. Life is not properly a war or battle—in which one kills and the other is killed; it is rather a field-game in which every man gets the invigorating benefit of the tussle, and, while bent on winning, keeps his temper, is free from personal sordidness in his motives, disdains to cheat or trample on his fellow, and counts the game at its best something better than his own triumph. It would be well if life were taken as earnestly and magnanimously as such a game.

A Game of Skill: **L**IFE is a game of skill, and not a game of chance.

Scott Sir Walter Scott put it well in a letter: 'Life . . . is like a game of cards—our hands are alternately good or bad, and the whole seems at first glance to depend on mere chance. But it is not so, for in the long run the skill of the player predominates over the casualties of the game.' And Sir Walter had a right to speak, for he knew the ups and downs of fortune. Despite the defeat of his financial ventures, he saw that skill, wisdom, industry, and character are more decisive factors

The Game of Life

in the higher issues than the vagaries of fickle fortune.

It would be idle sport, fit for dialecticians, to **Luck** discuss whether there is such a thing as 'luck.' In the Christian Scriptures 'chance' (τύχη) never occurs, except in the English mistranslation. The word has its use; it covers the incalculable elements in men's shifting careers; some have 'good fortune,' are 'lucky fellows,' while others seem to be the playthings of random surprises and mischances without deserving their fate. It is not wise to argue from quite remarkable cases of fortunate or unfortunate men. See life steadily and whole, and you see that Sir Walter Scott was right; it is skill, well-trained powers, unconquerable application, alert wits, and reliable character that win the prizes best worth winning in the world. The men who have risen suddenly by Fortune's favours and speculative ventures have often been forsaken by their deity, and, even if they have kept what they captured, their success has lacked those finer elements of love and worth which form the best part of life's prize.

Lord Rosebery, in his monograph on Napoleon, **Napol-
eon's
Star** has described how he was haunted and demoralised by the gaming passion on the grand scale. It was specially in war, 'the gambling of the gods,' that ~~he found the sting of sublimated excitement—~~ 'the haunting risk of disaster, the unspeakable elation

The Game of Life

of victory, the gigantic vicissitude of triumph and defeat, the tumult and frenzy and divine sweat, the very scorn of humanity and all that touches it. And Napoleon's character was profoundly affected by the gambling of warfare. The star of his destiny, which bulked so largely in his mind, was but the luck of the gambler on the vast scale. He had indeed his full measure of the gross and petty superstitions which ordinarily accompanies the vice. And so, even in his most desperate straits, he cannot bring himself to close the account and sign a peace ; for he always cherishes the gambler's hope that fortune, or the star of destiny, or whatever it may be called, may yet produce another transformation, and restore all his losses by a sudden stroke.' In just such a fashion do many play fast and loose with the laws of God and the inviolable issues of heart and life, always counting upon something turning up at the end to square their account and avert the moral disaster involved in their mad and heedless play.

Fortune-Making Cecil Rhodes and other fortune-makers have cast a demoralising spell over large numbers of their fellows. They have whetted an unhealthy appetite for sudden success. Their speculative adventures have taught others to play a big game in business, and to risk other people's money as well as their own. Some of these commercial gamblers come off winners in the field. Others

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fall ignobly. But the ambitious ignore the warning signals of the men who fall, and are tempted to try the same system of stakes and chances. This gaming passion is not only proved blind and foolish ; it is proved demoralising. It tends to bear down others who are playing fair and working hard for their gains, and to corrupt their *morale*. And it is cruelly callous concerning human flesh and blood and the commonweal.

The sporting passion is laying a fevered and disastrous hand upon men, on women too, and even on boys, whom you see—a bitter sight—crowding their faces together to scan the evening paper for the sporting results. It threatens to cast a blight over the wholesome games of the field. When it seizes a young man, it unfits him for steady, long-continued industry, infecting him with a calamitous desire to snatch at gain without the proper price of toil and thrift. Those who fall ■ prey to the craving cannot be trusted in office or profession. Surely, comrades, the hour has come for a crusade in which every man of honour, especially every man with a Christian or humane heart, shall employ every means and all his influence to discountenance and quell this destructive habit. Keep your hands clean in this respect, and, with good-humoured protests and independence, help the weaker striplings to withstand the temptation.

The
Sporting
Fever

The Game of Life

THAT by the way. Mark how this gaming instinct, this jaunty spirit of hazard, invades men's conceptions of life, and even projects itself upon eternity.

All the
Same 100
Years
Hence 'It will be all the same a hundred years hence,' is the merry moral often in our ears. When not repeated as a mere casual or jocular catchword innocent of real meaning, it is the language of this gay gaming view of life. It has little to do with our personal destinies beyond the veil, or with the social condition of the community when we have ceased to play our life's part in it for better or worse. It is oblivious of these remote consequences.

'All the same a hundred years hence.' It means that in this hurly-burly and topsy-turvy world things are speedily left behind and don't count. It means that the play of life will soon be over, the lights out, the company scattered, and—what will it all matter? It means that we are the sport and plaything of chance and destiny, that personal choice and high endeavour and the skilful handling of our life are vain. With this philosophic levity a man encourages himself to treat the issues of the present hour with jaunty nonchalance. It is in this mood that he is most liable to throw away his manhood for the hot excitement of the passing night, and, like sporting Esau, sell his birthright for a mess of pottage.

The Game of Life

Under this casual policy men take their swing, let things go, and 'chance it' for eternity.

The semi-agnostic modern mind fits in well with this spirit of living. Even death is dashed with the glamour of the great hazard—death, as Stephen Phillips dramatically presents it:

'That sting in the wine of being, salt of its feast.
To me what rapture in the ocean path
Save in the white leap and the dance of doom?
O death, thou hast a beckon to the brave,
Thou last sea of the navigator, last
Plunge of the diver, and last hunter's leap.'

Ulysses may be allowed to talk in such pagan language, but Christianity has given a new significance and seriousness to life without robbing it of wholesome joyousness. Is the pagan delight in the thoughtless hazard of the present moment returning upon us?

Huxley used language which shows that, especially where materialistic scepticism reigns, the worship of Fortune is close akin to the worship of Fate. It is the fashion for modern novelists to talk freely of Fate as though Fate 'kept the bank' and men were impotent. Mr Hardy says: 'The President of the Immortals had ended his sport with Tess.' Such pagans humiliate manhood before the twin-god of Fortune and Destiny. Huxley said that every man is set down at the chess-board to contend with a player who is invisible. Every move you make is beyond recall.

The Last Hazard

Pagan
Twin-
gods

The Game of Life

You are matched against an antagonist who is remorselessly just. Play but one pawn badly, and you must abide by the consequences throughout the rest of the game. You have to do with pitiless laws, and, do what you will, you must inevitably be beaten by your invisible opponent.

But why does not Huxley rather show that it is not a pitiless foe with whom you contend but a friend, that life lends itself to the gain of a wise and faithful man, that, though our days are limited, we may win the match by conquering adverse circumstances and mastering ourselves, and so may win the real prize to be plucked out of the game?

The Gaming View of Life This pagan gaming conception of life is demoralising. It tends to loosen the bracing sense of personal responsibility and to lower the values of individuality. It encourages a man to blame 'things,'—'my luck'—for his failure, and to soothe himself with the opiate, 'it was just my fate,' or 'it will be all the same a hundred years hence.'

But there is an inviolable moral order in life. We are called to play a game of skill, and, like Rantji and other masters of cricket, must acquire mastery of our powers, train for it, cultivate sound observation, keep our wits about us, 'keep the body under,' and, in the Pauline phrase, 'gym-

The Game of Life

nasticise' (the original of 'exercise ourselves unto godliness').

IN this human arena, where the 'field' is the world, there is a code of unwritten principles, **Rules of the Game** there are rules for the game of life.

Edward VII., soon after his accession, used sporting language to express his honourable intentions, saying that 'if he could not be his mother, yet he would play the game rightly.'

There is this to be said for the captives of the craze for games, in spite of the danger of their mad monomania, that they recognise the standard of honour that is to govern the players on the field. They are quick to roar out their hoarse condemnation if anything tricky or underhand is attempted.

The cricket-field has certainly the credit of teaching a man to suppress himself and care more for his own side to win than for his own average. He must not only bow to the laws of the club, but enter loyally into the spirit of the game. In a modern match between the Universities, the Cambridge captain took a certain line which was technically allowed by the M.C.C. laws, and the umpires could raise no demur. But the public at Lord's Ground soon let him understand that he was not observing the unwritten ethics of the game, that it was 'not cricket.' In the world's arena the

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same instinct for the fair thing should be accepted as the ruling law. Of many an action you say, not that it is dishonest, but that 'it's not cricket.'

All's fair in love and war, they say. And our competitive life often looks like war to the death. But even in the heat of the contest the game must be fair and square, 'honour bright,' no mean catching at advantage, no crushing strokes of brute force, no shabby deceptions—that's 'not cricket.' Numbers of our politicians, in plain terms, are not 'playing the game'; they are fouling. In business or the professions an instinct of honour will make us feel that we are 'above' misrepresenting our rival, getting him discredited, mercilessly undercutting him so as to kill him off. Many of our fortune-makers will have to stand a stiff judgment for having risen by such methods of inhumanity. In Church controversies, also, there are strokes that 'hit below the belt,' that play pretty low down. Never 'stoop to conquer'; you may, perhaps, conquer by stooping to mean and unholy things, but you will never be able to get the 'stoop' out of your being.

Playing
for the
Team

The *Field* has made inquiries into the question why certain games, like cricket, should be so much more popular than others. It divides all games into two classes—those in which the unit is a team and those in which the unit is an in-

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dividual. And, almost without exception, games in which a company of men play each for his own side are much more popular than games in which an individual plays for his own hand alone. Where the unit is an individual, the stimulus of prizes has to be given; but no such stimulus is necessary where each man subordinates himself to the general interest of his side and plays for the honour and glory of victory.

While in life's competition every man has to fight for his own hand, he is under another law at the same time, namely, that in this struggle for the legitimate rewards of skill and effort he must observe the usages of honour and comradeship. Even in the heated contest he must keep a touch of chivalry and human kindness. I cannot be slack for the sake of my rival; yet I cannot but remember that he, as well as myself, has a way to make, perhaps a home and family to keep, certainly a character to preserve in the temptations of the hurly-burly. Better for me to miss the biggest rewards of success than to win them at the cost of honour and the well-being of fellow-men.

There is, with all the seriousness of life, a certain play-element in the game, which we must keep up if we are to get the best out of life. Referring to R. L. Stevenson, Mr Chesterton has said that 'the characteristic of Stevenson was his levity; and his

A Light
Hand:
Good
Humour

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levity was the flower of a hundred grave philosophies. The strong man is always light; the weak man is always heavy.' And in the great game a light hand, a light and steady touch, is one of the signs of true mastery. 'Isn't it *fun*?' exclaimed Bishop Phillips Brooks, referring to the ecclesiastical tournaments which he could take so sunnily while at bottom so earnest about the vital issues. Some young men, and older ones—a minority, certainly—take themselves and life too seriously, and by over-tension weaken their powers for the sterner side of life's engagements.

Good humour is another of the characteristics of the true player. Temper is fatal, except as giving 'temper' to the steel of a mastered will. We are 'caught out,' have our defeats and bad days; others snatch the popular honours and rewards; casualties will happen. It is one of the unwritten rules of the game that a player shall accept victory without rasping superiority, and shall accept defeat with good humour and a fine spirit, showing his victory over himself.

The Best
Prize

Yes, that is a large part of real success. It is yourself that you have to defeat, your vagrant imaginings, vagabond lusts, and selfish proclivities. No matter what notoriety may be given to men of sudden fortune who rise like erratic comets in the commercial sky, the best of all good things to be won in this game of life is won by steady skilful

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handling of yourself and your tools. It is won by those who gird themselves, who contend to the uttermost for the highest prizes in honour and affection, who keep the quality and vision of their spirit unwarped and unsullied, who 'keep faith and a good conscience.' Paul meant everything lofty when he put his ambition in one word—'that I may *win Christ*.'

The Simple Life Policy

'In wit a man, simplicity a child.'—POPE.

VI

The Simple Life Policy

THERE is one art much coveted by some The War
of Wits
younger men who find themselves drawn into the game of life and bitten with the ambition to succeed. Taking stock of the failures and successes in life, they envy the man who, while playing fairly enough, plays his own veiled game with cool, keen-witted shrewdness, and wins by skilful tactics. How can they hold their own in the battle of wits unless they acquire his art, that art which can be learnt only in the world's competitive school, an art which, to be perfect, must look as though it were quite artless?

Pitted especially against astute and clever rivals, how are you to defend yourself against adroit schemings and specious duplicities and push your way through the tangled thicket of this motley world's mixed moralities? In order to contend successfully with the plausible and acute, must you not acquire their gift, catch their subtle methods, learn to watch men and keep your own counsel and prevent your face and your words from betraying your full mind?

The Simple Life Policy

**Artifice
and
Duplicity** It may be a paying policy ; but, if it pays in one way, it carries a heavy penalty with it in other ways. Mark the men who acquire fine skill in playing their sinuous game, in assuming attitudes and affecting airs, in winning their point by hiding their hand, in adapting themselves to different sorts of people by easy equivocations. You come to feel somehow that they are not wholly yours as they profess to be, that their minds are carrying on a subtle play behind their eyes. If you saw deeper still, you would see that this art of theirs is a gravely perilous gift, and is imperceptibly ingraining their nature with cold and calculating artifice. Men are not blind to the deadly effect of vicious habits and bold untruthfulness; but they are often blind to the deadly effect of playing skilfully and shiftily in the back windings of their mind. Probably they do not know that their nature is becoming tortuous and essentially untrue.

Many a tragedy is slowly and silently proceeding under the surface of professional or commercial success. The man who has become infected with the wary world-spirit is skilful in carrying on two lines of policy at the same time, subtle in refining away the broader moral distinctions, nimble in manipulating facts for a smart deal and words for a fair-faced statement ; or he plays off mixed motives one to cover the other, quoting to himself

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one reason for his generous acts while, at the rear, another and a calculating incentive is moving him. He may be religious and innocent of lies, but with all this shrewd double-play he is becoming profoundly untruthful and unreal, taking in himself as much as he can ever take in the world.

Tennyson recognises that there is a simplicity which is the distinctive mark of the grandest men and has no kinship with the simple innocents and fools of the world. In his noble ode to the Duke of Wellington he calls that master of military strategy and statesmanship :

Grand
Simplicity :
Wellington

'Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.'

Of Dr Chalmers it was said by one who knew him intimately : 'In simplicity he was a child. By simplicity we do not mean the simplicity of the head ; of that he had none ; but we refer to a certain quality of heart and life which gives a directness to all actions, and a certain beautiful unconsciousness of self—an outgoing of the whole nature that we see in children.' And one thinks of the great artist, G. F. Watts—I have never met any one, great or obscure, whom one felt to be so utterly single of heart and pellucid in nature.

Such men may be as soundly shrewd in their judgment as you could well desire, able to see far

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and marshall great schemes and bide their time ; they may have many compartments and complex powers in their natural endowment. But, with all the convolutions in their brains, they have no convolutions in their moral quality, and an essential singleness of spirit governs and ennobles their life.

**Paying
Policy**

POLICY may pay, in the mercenary sense. Astute men of subtle wits and the gift for scheming do sometimes snatch success out of the hands of the nobly simple. I should disdain to plead for the highest line of life on the main ground that it would be the best-paying policy. Even if you were to win the game by clever manœuvres, you would still be losing the very best—losing 'soul'—and winning in addition a warped and false grain in your moral nature.

But as a bare matter of fact, the subtle life policy is a bad life-assurance, and often defeats itself in the long run.

**A Match
for Craft**

I have heard of a City man of single-minded straightness, whose way of speaking and doing business led a cunning observer to remark, 'He must be playing a *very* deep game !' But it was no game at all, no disguised play, no 'blind' ; it was unpretending honour and simple veracity, well backed by skill ; and, mark you, it was found to be a match for craft on its own ground.

You have seen how, in a company of men and

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women who are plausible or shifty, when a man enters who speaks with the accent of sincerity and who rings plainly genuine, he immediately evokes confidence and eclipses the shifty ones. In the relations between the two sexes, some adopt airs and flattering manœuvres in order to win homage or a heart, and you see them missing their mark, while another walks in with unsophisticated simplicity—almost ‘country’ simplicity—and with an unadulterated heart, and unwittingly captures the coveted love or homage and carries off the prize.

How to cope with the cunning and foil double play? By counter-strokes of cunning and deeper duplicity? No, but by straight honour supported by energy and trained wisdom. Such is your best defence against the worst mischances of life. If you wonder uneasily how you are to “cleave your way through the wily rivalries of the world and secure a sufficiency (God does not promise more), then, let a comrade entreat you, do not try to acquire the mystifications and calculating shrewdness of the over-wise, but rely on the weapons of the single-hearted sons of truth and honour.

Do not tell me that the man of law and the man of accounts will smile at this as impracticable idealism; men of the cynical breed are always ready with the smile which sheds a blight on everything heroic. From among the best and most successful of City men I have had it certified

Verdict of
the Best

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that this best principle of life is also the soundest in the end. The situations where a brave and capable man must fail if he takes this line are not so common as some men would have you believe. The fight is incessant and hard, and those who are simply true may win only a moderate position; but in numbers of cases a good man's defeat is less the penalty of his principle than the result of some deficiency in skill or natural endowments or application. Those who do suffer and go down without incurring any such blame are in the company of many of the noblest men; they are sharing the cross of Him who went down before the schemers; like their Master, the disciples will also rise again in moral triumph and meanwhile enjoy the peace of an unsullied heart.

Lincoln : Abraham Lincoln in his stalwart simplicity,
Gordon General Gordon with his heroic and soulful purity of motive—such men as these manifestly put to shame the politic sons of Macchiavelli with all their ingenuity in devices. As in personal appearance there is a quiet simplicity of taste which outshines the most 'fetching' show, so in the competitive arena there is a singleness of spirit which usually outstrips clever guile.

Character and Credit **T**HERE is something conquering and commanding in such sterling singleness of life. It commands confidence, and very generally

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confidence commands the market. The reputation which comes from accumulated character underlies the most solid business in the world ; the trust it wins is often a man's most valuable asset, the larger portion of his working capital. It answers for him when unkind or disturbing rumours are bruited about concerning him or his affairs. On the strength of the credit he has won, people give him the benefit of the doubt. To defend himself he does not need to go to the housetop or issue a statement to declare his innocence. He has been found true steel ; and that fact answers for him. In case of trouble and stress, it makes others patient with him and leaves him time to square himself before the world. It draws friendly help from unexpected quarters. For young men pushing their way, such a voucher opens many a door and gives them the chance to do their best and prove their mettle. And those who have proved themselves steel-true, yet meet with misfortune and fail, are cherished in the perpetual regard of all whose estimate is worth a thought.

That old Supplanter, Jacob, on the other hand, has hopelessly lost caste in the eyes of the average man. The scheme was acutely prepared, the subterfuge by which he was to outwit his brother and win his point. He won—and lost. Soon he is outwitted in his own line. When he falls into Laban's hands, Greek meets Greek, diamond

The
Sup-
planter
Out-
witted

The Simple Life Policy

cuts diamond; the seller is sold, cheated of his wages and cheated of his wife, until, you would think, he must be thoroughly disgusted with all policy and cunning. His very sons rise up to deceive him, and it takes the long and late discipline of life to straighten out that warp in his nature.

The Simple Life: Charles Wagner, in that book of exquisite taste and high vision, has for ever revealed the true glory of *The Simple Life*. It is not a mere barren negative, cutting us down to a poor and thin existence; it is life at its highest reach, yielding its fullest fruits of pure delight.

Triumph over the World A SUCH a life is a grand victory. It does not come easily; it is a conquest. Think of the complicated parts which a man must play in the midst of a society or community so rife with affectations. There are courtesies of speech and bearing which tempt to unreal professions; there are all sorts of people to whom we feel bound to accommodate ourselves by wary evasions, whose favour it may be to our advantage to gain. Will not the man of the world assure you that social and commercial fictions of a comfortable and convenient kind are necessary for the smooth working of mixed human life? And how enticing is the conclusion that considerable latitude must be allowed for the politic insincerities which lubricate our intercourse

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with other people and at the same time work towards our own advancement!

It takes courage, and unfailing good humour, to enable us to fight against this tendency to finesse and policy. It needs a light touch, a fine temper—as against a hard and blunt severity—as well as a firm grip of principle. It is often the best way to get on square terms with others by immediately assuming that they are ready to meet you on the basis of sincerity and simple truth; it is wonderful how they answer to what you expect from them.

John Bright is reported to have declared that **Victoria** Queen Victoria was the most absolutely truthful person he had ever met. And it was partly her essential simplicity that crowned her royalty with the people's homage. Stand detached from yourself and observe whether you are sliding into half-conscious guile of thought, whether there is a false strain working itself into your fibre. Study the typical story of Balaam, and see how he **Balaam** manœuvred with both Balak and his inward oracle so as to win honour and wealth under cover of a falsified sanction from God, how shifty and crooked he became, and how the crooked man got the crooked oracle and fell baffled in the crooked road, entangled in the net which his fatal cleverness had devised. This is the great disaster awaiting the votaries of policy. And one of the great victories of life is to keep one's spirit true, to emerge from

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the war of wits with the single eye and the single heart—true steel.

‘Nous’ ‘Nous’ is indispensable. In St Paul’s saying, ‘We are not ignorant of his (the tempter’s) devices,’ each of the terms, ‘ignorant’ and ‘devices,’ is a derivative of the Greek ‘nous’; we are to counter ‘nous’ with ‘nous,’ guile with gumption, and, in Wesley’s phrase, to ‘have our wits about us.’ To be true steel, of course, you need not be transparent nor show your hand like a simpleton. The right type of shrewdness is in perfect keeping with singleness of spirit.

The Beatitude of the Pure The Master Himself kept His own counsel, as wise as He was without guile. He was incalculably complex in His nature, with convolutions beyond our power to trace. Yet, through all the complexities of His mind and mission, how essentially single His spirit and simple His method—rare as morning air, limpid as spring water, clear as a running brook, ever standing in the truth, utterly veracious and sublimely superior to worldly policy!

Is not this, indeed, the meaning of that choice beatitude—among those beatitudes with their sevenfold colours like a rainbow round the throne of Christ—‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God’? Not the ‘immaculate’—it would be superfluous to say, ‘Blessed are the holy’—but rather those of pure intent and single spirit, free

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from duplicities in their motives. 'Blessed' in that trueness of spirit which gives *vision*, that honest and unadulterated child-heart which enables us to see our Father-God and the Good everywhere.

Here, then, is one of the tests with which a man in the world ought to measure himself. Wise in wits you must be, with the wisdom of the nature man. Yet something of the 'child,' with the clear and direct look in the eye and pure ring in the laugh, must outlive all else. Is the 'child' dead in you? If we saw you as God sees you, should we discover a shrewd, wrinkled, over-wise, little, old, old man? That is what your nature can be reduced to by the policies of the world. And that is what the regenerating Spirit can transform—the old and wizened spirit softened and rectified, the young and clean spirit bred by the magiĉ of Christ, when you are born anew.

The
Child-
heart

In the Swim

513
T

*'Most men eddy about
Here and there—eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft, are hurl'd in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving
Nothing; and then they die—
Perish—and no one asks
Who or what they have been,
More than he asks what waves,
In the moonlit solitudes mild
Of the midmost ocean, have swell'd,
Foam'd for a moment, and gone.*

*And there are some whom ■ thirst
Ardent, unquenchable, fires
Not with the crowd to be spent,
Not without aim to go round
In ■ eddy of purposeless dust.'*

—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

VII

In the Swim

CHARLES KINGSLEY in 1871 wrote a characteristic letter 'To the Young Men of ^{Black} ^{Fools and} ^{White} Chester,' which opened thus :

'My dear Young Men,—The human race may, for practical purposes, be divided into three parts :

1. Honest men : who mean to do right ; and do it. 2. Knaves : who mean to do wrong ; and do it. 3. Fools : who mean to do whichever of the two is pleasanter. And these last may be divided again into—

'Black fools : who would rather do wrong ; but dare not ; unless it is the fashion.

'White fools : who would rather do right ; but dare not ; unless it is the fashion.

'Now the honest men do not need advice ; and the knaves will not take it ; neither, I fear, will the black fools. They will agree, in their secret hearts, most of them, that every word I say is true. But they do not wish it to be true ; and therefore they will try to wriggle out from under it by far-fetched excuses. . . . But of the white fools I

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have hope. For they are not bad fellows; some of them, indeed, are very near being very good fellows, and would like so much to do everything which is right and proper—only it takes so much trouble; and perhaps it might look rather odd now and then.'

Curiously, by the way, the same distinction is drawn in the book of Proverbs between two types of the fool—the term 'Kesil' answering to Kingsley's 'black fool,' and 'Ivveleth' to the 'white fool.'

The White Fool The 'white fool' as we see him in every circle and set of men has his good dispositions, an easy good-nature, a companionable wish to be a man among men and do what is becoming. So far it is in his heart to be worthy and Christian, but it is only a fluid and unstable wish, not firm and strenuous enough to make him face what is irksome to his own easy temperament and unpopular among his fellows. Just one thing he lacks to be a Man—the grit of virile character, the sinews of individuality.

In the Swim Young men of warm social instincts are naturally highly sensitive to the favour or the frown of their own company. When they are 'in the swim,' they instinctively conform to the type and tone of the men who lead their set, and shrink from being counted singular or superior or priggish. In the open world as much as in the Church 'dissent' is

In the Swim

taboo in many circles, and we are tempted to conformity by our desire for a good standing and our natural disposition to be at one with our kind. See it in fashion—how city young men adopt a common gait and get-up, ■ long stride of step, a shepherd's fancy-crook hung on the arm, and other marks of the current pattern. The same imitation prevails, less visibly but not less certainly, in the dominating style of talk and thinking, in social habit and affectations of moral nonchalance. Nothing rules us in such lordly fashion as this masterful social opinion. And, as Kingsley said, the 'white fool' would like much to do whatever is right and proper if only it did not look odd in others' eyes and did not cost considerable trouble to do it. It takes some amount of courage to be a fop, and it takes more grit to be unsophisticated and independently devout as ■ Christian disciple among the lively sons of the world.

'God made Lincoln, and then broke the mould.' The Man
Singular
Such individuality as we see in Lincoln and Tolstoi and Laurence Oliphant is rare to-day, and it is apt to be repellent at first owing to its sharp corners and its hard difference from the comfortable conventions which make social and commercial intercourse go smoothly. You might suppose, from the sameness of men to-day, that all had been cast in the one mould and that it is never broken or re-made. Some few men take a vain

In the Swim

delight in being singular and offending the conventions, but most men have scarcely the courage to be themselves. And yet it is among young men that you would expect frank self-assertion and independence of common custom. They, of all men, ought not as yet to be the slaves of things-as-they are ; it is from among them that you look for daring opinions and diversions towards radicalism in religious belief and social practice and political opinion. Rank and outspoken individuality, running into extravagance, has its own risks, but it will be only too well carved and cut down to the ruling standard in course of time. Greater in these relaxing days is the risk of being an ape of others, a chameleon that takes its colour from its surroundings, an easy prey of the social drift.

Zeit-geist **D**RIFT is the peculiar peril of those who are 'in the swim,' sociable, good-natured, and easily led.

The 'zeit-geist,' the 'spirit of the age,' lays hold of us all like a strong current. We ought to belong to our own generation and keep a hospitable mind for fresh ideas, yet with some reserves.

D'Israeli D'Israeli, in the days before he became Lord
v. Gladstone Beaconsfield, was Lord Rector of a certain northern university, and I well remember him giving his rectorial address to some two thousand students on this subject. 'What,' said he, 'is the

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spirit of the age, of that world in which in a few years more or less you will have entered, where you will have to encounter every conceivable difficulty, perplexities of judgment, tests of all your qualities and searching trials of your character?' To know the spirit of our time, he declared, was one of the chief means of guiding our course and winning success. His successor in the Rectorship was Gladstone, and the general counsel of his address was—Have fixed principles. Each touched a side of truth, but D'Israeli's advice may be followed to a man's hurt. See how men were swept away by the frantic Crusading spirit of one age, the gay cavalier spirit of another, and the sceptical spirit of yet another. And we may be sure that our own age has its dangerous 'drift,' which stalwart and enlightened men must resist.

This 'drift' of our time is towards sport, sport-talk, sport by proxy, amusements of the spectacular sort, the materialistic money-standard of life and luxury, false excitements uniting with the money-hunger to foster betting and gambling, idle sensations in light fiction, and priestly pageantry in religion. Multitudes are 'going with the stream,' away from the simple life, simple pleasures, and simple piety, and they feel no shock at their drift because the tide on every side is bearing so many in the same direction. The tide will doubtless

The
Modern
Drift

In the Swim

turn some day—we believe in the ultimate advance of the race—but in the meanwhile it is a true man's imperative duty to 'swim against the stream.'

Love on
the Tide

DRIFT, in more personal and social ways, is often destiny in the making.

Maggie Tulliver, in *The Mill on the Floss*, had no intention of witching away the heart of Stephen Guest from her cousin, and, although she resists the temptation at times, she is slipping into his masterful fascinations. She finds herself, without premeditation, in the boat with her cousin's lover; the spell steals over her; the river tide bears the boat down, down unobserved, until it is out in the open waters; and she awakes from her delicious love-dream and starts up to see how distant now are the banks. So was it with the current of that urgent love which belonged to another. With only languid resistance, she allowed it to drift her into a situation which she had never foreseen. 'The tide was doing it all.' The slight gliding stream was carrying her away with him and was settling things for her independently of her deliberate choice. She was doing nothing decisive—only weakly permitting things to decide for her. 'All yielding . . . is the partial sleep of thought; it is the submergence of our own personality by another. Every influence tended to lull her into

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acquiescence ; that dreamy gliding in the boat for hours helped to bring her into subjection to that strong mysterious charm.' There was no point where she decisively overstepped the mark—just a drift that soon compromised her, settling her future by inches and in delicious ease.)

It is a picture of life. [The people who go wrong are mostly 'white fools' and have no ill-intent ; they just begin to drift, and the insidious currents round them stealthily bear them on towards the reefs. Just a little slackening of virtuous habit and religious self-discipline ; some slight loosening of the old bonds at which they fretted. You yourself, like all of us, know too well how it happens. How pleasant and soothing to yield to your natural tendencies and your surroundings and jocund company, to lie relaxed and let the lapping waters of social life lull and hush you to soporific content ! How delightful the early sweets of careless relaxation and the sound of lively voices and the sight of merry faces—the mere sensation of letting yourself glide onward as things take you ! A sort of infatuation blinds you to the meaning of this indulgence of self, this abandonment of pious habits, this narcotising of conscience. You do not intend—not you—to cast off holy things ; you settle nothing by deliberate choice, make no final decision to defy the calls of the soul and of Christ and the laws of rectitude. You let things lie, and

SR
With
Oars
Shipped

In the Swim

you suppose they remain the same. But time is deciding for you. While you are passive and slack, the tides are determining for you what you will not determine for yourself; they are widening the distance between yourself and God, and are leaving you more and more helplessly at the mercy of ever-growing 'streams of tendency' that hasten towards moral disaster and shame.

The Greek Sybarite Tito Melema, the most vivid figure in George Eliot's *Romola*, the fascinating, clever Greek, is by no means bad at the outset, only negatively good. He is not vicious when, with his charms and fine acquirements, he wins the heart of the cherry-lipped girl Tessa as well as the cultured Romola. With abundant good-humour and polished grace of mind and manner, he gives pleasure and seeks the pleasant path. (From everything that is irksome and painful, however, he recoils. When duty demands self-denial, he easily persuades himself, with his elusive gift, that he may follow his complacent inclination without doing harm which cannot afterwards be repaired. With no policy of ill, simply living by the impulse of the hour, taking the way that seems the most smooth and agreeable, he glides by inches into deceptions, one drawing him into another, until he becomes entangled in such meshes of trouble and enmity that he is precipitated into villainy, the destroyer of other lives. Imperceptibly at first, subtly and blindly, he drifts

In the Swim

by easy stages to a lot and destiny which he never had in view.

‘I never imagined I should come to this,’ many a one has said bitterly when brought down to the dust. Samson never meant to go so far as he ultimately found himself, so much so that he is surprised when he wakes from his careless stupor of self-indulgence and finds that he is shorn of his strength and the Lord is departed from him. The most popular and appealing story in the world is a story of drifting—the younger son who launches out upon his jaunty adventure to ‘live his own life,’ who finds himself in the swim with jovial company, and glides downwards, till he is on the rocks, and with the shock ‘comes to himself,’ evidently astonished that this is what his father’s son has come to—the swine-husks of the prodigal.

‘Drifted’ might be written as the brief epitaph over the grave of many a man and woman who is stranded far from God. Over that man, for example, of whom I heard in recent years, one of the wastrels of Western Australia, who met with a fatal accident when stupefied by drink. An inquest was to be held, but in the outlandish settlement not a single New Testament could be procured on which to swear the jury—until they were searching the body, when they found one sewn in his outworn clothes. That told the tale—a godly upbringing, a careless loosening of religious

Rude
Awaken-
ings

Drift-
wood

In the Swim

ties, the growing power of evil habits, a clinging desire to keep hold of the Old Book for the sake of some hope of good it kept for his heart, but a current too strong for him now bearing him onward to an unhappy end, drifted to a wrecking with the Bible in his hands!

**Eddies of
the City** Many coming up to great cities from small villages rejoice that now they are 'in the swim,' but scarcely observe that they are at the same time among perilous cross-currents. Just a stroll about town, a day 'on the river' with those who disregard the Day of Rest, free-tongued talks in the common-room, practices meant at first to be 'only this once' but difficult to stop—by such stealthy gradations the drift lays hold of them, and, when they have drifted far from the old kindly climate of innocence, from the Christian homes and the Sunday Schools in which many of them were reared, how hopelessly impossible it seems to recover the lost ground, and so they cover themselves with the disguise of a gay, callous indifference.

**Land-
marks** **E**VERY man, however complacent about his own security, should take his bearings in some testing manner once in a while. Is there not some spot sacred to memory where you can stand and measure your present bent of life by laying it alongside your earlier self? Is there not

In the Swim

some old landmark which will enable you to judge whether you are going up or down the stream?

Oliver Wendell Holmes said wisely: 'I find **Holmes** that the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving. To reach the port of heaven we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it—but we must sail and not drift nor lie at anchor.' It is the word that our young 'white fools' need to have rung into their ears. Life is a fight and not a drift. Call up the spirit of battle which should surge in every young man's veins. Pull yourself together; gird up your loins, tighten your belt, and battle against the tides that run towards danger.

An hard law, surely—some will say—that the good life should be 'against the grain.' Strange that gravitation should be downwards, that to rise we must climb painfully in defiance of our nature, that it should not be our easy bent but 'hard to be a Christian!' But it is equally 'against the grain' to labour, to learn one's alphabet and arithmetic, to master any craft or art. Even education itself is a victory of effort over the drift of our natural inclination. It is not at all strange, but accordant with all our best life, that we must discipline the spirit with drill and wrestlings and buffet the waves of evil propensity in the flesh and win our manhood at a great price.

In the Swim

The
Turn of
the Tide

'Nature' is not against you for long. A man who had had only the poor education of a work-house in his boyhood had a brilliant idea as we talked about my coming voyage to America. He remembered that the sea had the curvature of the earth, and remarked, 'Yes, you'll go faster when half-way across the Atlantic—it will be up-hill for the first half of the voyage, and down-hill the other half.' Let our laugh at ignorance pass, and see the truth he had incidentally struck. It is an up-hill fight during the early part of our life, a fight *against* tides of tendency; but, after we have fought our way so far, it becomes 'second nature' to be good; gravitation draws us upward. Beating up against the stream to a point, we find that the new stream of tendency works in our favour. There are better currents awaiting us, tides of sacred and helpful influence, places where our sails can be sure of catching the trade-winds of the Spirit—you know *where* to go to get the aid of this breeze of the Good Spirit. Get your life upon the breast of these uplifting tides by throwing yourself into the committed and full-bodied Christian life. As in the line of danger, so in the way of safety, get 'into the swim,' the strenuous Christian career, in those circles where the currents of interest and service run strong in favour of noble and holy living.

The author of *Ecce Homo* said that 'no virtue is safe without enthusiasm.' There must be inward

In the Swim

fires if we are to have dynamic driving power sufficient to overbear the drift of the world. Lost heat is lost power. When your Christian life cools within you, when the fires burn low, you begin to lose power. And lost power within you means so much more likelihood that the swirl of evil tides will lap the sides of your frail craft and softly bear you away. Let no man dare to call it cant, it is tested truth, that we all need the powers and fires of Christ in our heart to keep us safe and nerve us for the long battle. Go—let us say it to each other—go and renew those sacred fires of love and burning purpose. From that Divine source comes the dynamic that can make us men. Don't drift, but live royally.

The Strong Man

■ *To be weak is miserable—doing or suffering.*

■ *What is strength, without a double share
Of wisdom? Vast, unwieldy, burthensome,
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall
By weakest subtleties; strength's not made to rule,
But to subserve, where wisdom bears command.*

—MILTON.

■ *The strong man will ever find work, which means
difficulty, pain, to the full measure of his strength.*

—CARLYLE.

■ *Languor is not in your heart!
Weakness is not in your word! . . .
Ye move through the ranks, recall
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
Praise, re-inspire the brave! . . .
Strengthen the wavering line,
'Stablish, continue our march,
On to the bound of the waste!
On to the City of God!'*

—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

VIII

The Strong Man

‘CALL me anything you like,’ a lively friend ^{A Man’s} ^{Man} exclaimed to me; ‘call me hot-tempered, or mad, or anything else, but don’t call me “amiable!”’ It was a merry protest against the insinuation of dulcet feebleness of character. To be described as ‘such a *nice* young man’ is, to the ear of the virile, like an accusation. Men of spirit would as lief you counted them somewhat wicked as thought them amiably insipid, harmlessly nice, softly good. In spite of the extravagance of language, their resentment is on the whole a good sign, and just what you would expect from sturdy youth.

‘What a man admires most in women,’ and ‘What a woman admires most in men,’ formed the subject of a modern magazine symposium. A woman’s favourite type of young man must be left to be etched by a feminine pen: and a man’s woman is not our present theme. A man’s man would for us be a more interesting subject of discussion. It is no mean distinction to be ■

The Strong Man

young men's man. He is a type *sui generis*, and it is beyond our powers to tabulate the elusive qualities that play around his central strength. Strength must be the centre and backbone of his build, but strength held in fine reserve, under cover of casual ease, taken lightly and not too seriously, with elements of surprise. He may be odd, *outré*, a hard hitter, ironical—much can be forgiven him—but he must be fair and ring true, must know a young man's mind sympathetically, must have some sort of humour, some touch of fine sensibility at the core of his strength, some heroic element, something that at the fit time will reveal him magnanimous. The one thing not to be endured is mild weakness.

Weak and Bad 'He's not wicked,' you sometimes hear it said; 'he's not bad at heart; he's only *weak*.' Numbers of the weak folk have scarcely spirit enough to be boldly bad or bravely good. Misdirected energy, even if erratic at the start, is capable of being subdued and taught wisdom; but what can be made of weakness? He may be an agreeable fellow, may be of the gentlest breeding, may be sweet of disposition; but he is feeble; and that takes away half the value of his good points. Is he suave and good-tempered? But a bit of temper—if only it be not sullen and moody—may be a good quality in the making, the fire that betokens high spirit. In virtue of his very defect in

The Strong Man

temper, he may never be a man of tempered mettle. How can one be a man of mettle if one lacks the glory of manhood which is strength?

Men may be like a horse with no 'vice' in its breed, and yet their weakness of nature may be within an easy stage of vice. They are the choice prey of every sort of tempter and temptress, easily led, pliable in the hands of clever speculators, sanguine dupes of the betting man or the money-lender, the failures of the Colonies and the wrecks of hot countries—the 'white fools' described in another chapter. Look at those faces under the night lamp, the people with frayed shoes and ill-covered signs of vagrancy, the raw material of vice and crime—see the weak mouth, the loose lip, the signs which tell you that it was not inherent wickedness but sheer weakness that brought them low. Short of such tragedy, the mildly weak are the disappointment of their masters in bank and office, and the parasites of their relatives. Life will be a sore schooling for them; and well for them if it puts some iron in their blood, drills them and develops stamina, teaching them to clench their teeth and fight, and girding them with hard-won convictions. Otherwise they are likely always to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the strong and imperious.

The 'son of nobles' is usually the most liable of all young men to be somewhat slack of hand.

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Sons of the Self-made The father rose from the ranks, fought his way to prominence or fortune, and stands honoured among the stalwarts of push and principle. You would suppose that the sons would inherit the vigour of the self-made father. But often we find them flaccid, easy-going, inept and pithless parasites. They, more than others, need to be spurred to the fight and forced to rely on their own efforts and nerved with moral courage. We observe it also in the disciples of heroes and apostles; Paul seems to have felt it necessary to spur young Timothy to a valiant battle; and it was Joshua the lieutenant of Moses who had to be urged repeatedly, 'Be strong, be strong and very courageous.'

Arthur, as depicted by Tennyson, stands for the soul of man, and most of his difficulties and sorrows in ruling his empire arose from his soft-natured weakness. It needs a master-spirit to govern and subdue the insurgent forces in the kingdom of manhood.

Extremes of Strength **O**N the other hand, the strong man suffers from 'the defects of his qualities.'

Lord Russell of Killowen—Sir Charles Russell—stands at the other extreme, the typical example of strength in excess. Like all men of relentless force, he bore down opponents by sheer might of aggressive will, cowed the poor witness

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under crushing cross-examination, and drove his advocacy of his client's case to the point of injustice.

The strong man is often intolerant of slow wits and the minor weaknesses of average men and women. The men of strenuous might who drive a way through the common crowd to the pinnacle of commercial fortune or professional honour are often reckless of their fellows' feelings and welfare, not only masterful and dictatorial, but, like Cecil Rhodes and Jay Gould, unscrupulous in the use of their strength. They so overbear and impose their personality as to suck the vitality out of the people whom they use. The sins of the strong may be gilded with success and popular praise, but in their own way they are as reprehensible as the sins of the weak, and more likely to escape discovery and keep the heart hard.

'A fellah's got no business to be so crooked,' it was said of the hunchback at Oliver Wendell Holmes's *Breakfast Table*; and those who are mentally virile and lusty of body, well-knit as a Roman soldier, are liable to be pagan in the consciousness of power and health. The hardy are apt to be hard, the robust to be robustious—even that muscular Christian, Charles Kingsley, with all his heroic magnanimity, did not escape the danger. There is something lacking in the strength which is inconsiderate of tender sensibilities, unsym-

The
Roman
Type

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pathetic with people who lie under some disability of mind or body, overbearing towards juniors and womankind.

Nerve and Sinew Nerve is as indispensable as sinew to the highest type of manhood. Invincible soldiers like Lawrence, Napier, and Lee have often been found tender as a woman towards human frailty and the poor 'little ones' of this heedless world. Indeed it is not sheer strength that makes the best soldier; threads of fine nerve run through his fibre. To be a genuinely strong man you must have something that is 'pure womanly' lurking somewhere in your heart. He whom the Roman world could not subdue and who proved to be its Conqueror, the 'Strong Son of God, immortal Love,' had those keen sensibilities and human feelings which have made Him stronger than the strong; He had that 'weakness in strength' which, according to Browning's 'Saul,' we crave for in the Almighty God.

Samson That symbolic strong man, Samson—did the secret of his strength lie in his hair? Those long locks of his were the badge of his Nazarite semi-monastic vows, by which he had been pledged from his boyhood to temperance and mastered passion. They were the sign, not the source, of what made him strong. And when, after long dallying with his temptress and relaxing his moral discipline and living in self-indulgence, he allowed

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the badge of consecrated manhood to be cut off, it was the last decisive act of abandonment; thereby he was casting off all restraints and cutting himself off from God and the founts of moral force. Actually sleeping in the house of the Philistine enemy—a vivid example of the carelessness of the over-confident—he played with temptation, always relying on his exceptional strength, of course, to pull him through, laughing gaily at the idea of ever being caught. But what if the narcotic pleasures of some relaxed hour dull his wits and induce him to part with his secret? He forgot to keep guard on that weak side which may be always found somewhere in strong men, and became the feeble toy of subtle seductions.

‘No fear of me,’ say you? ‘I can take care of myself. I can go so far and not go to excess.’ **Over-confident** Find me a man of spirit and conscious power who is not confident that he can be in any company and take no harm, that he can go just so far and then stop whenever he likes, can break off whenever he wants to? But what if that ‘want to’ itself becomes enfeebled and impotent under the slow lapping of pleasure that can wear down your recoil from evil — the waves can wear the rocks? Sturdy enough in other ways, you may unwittingly weak at that soft spot.

‘History,’ says the historian Mr Lecky, ‘is full of examples of men who in great trials and emer-

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The Frailty of Giants gencies have acted with admirable and persevering heroism, yet who readily succumbed to private vices and passions.' We do not need to go beyond Napoleon and Nelson for examples of men who were giants of strength on one side and weak on another. You who have lusty energies, warm blood, an eager spirit and a masterful will are likely to have vehement and imperious temptations from the pride of life and the appetites of the flesh. The man who, we are told, could rend a lion had lion-like passions that rent his life in twain. Conscious of conquering power, you are confident that you can do without wrestlings in prayer and the guardian grace of Christ. But you are the very men who need these defences the most. That strong animal in you is voracious and may become wild with unholy cravings. That pride of skill and power lays you open to flattery and the chance of sudden enrichment or popular favour at the cost of principle. You are as fallible in these directions as the weaklings whom you despise are in other ways; and you are not secure without the self-discipline of the humble and the watchful practice of the presence of God.

Genius Astray Faust was strong, and Goethe his interpreter was strong in intellect and will; yet each had his hours of weak recoil and his moral debacle. Satan was strong, as Milton depicted him, yet

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diabolic none the less. Bacon was one of England's statesmen ; but did not pride of power tempt him to accept bribes and lead to his dishonour? It is one of the tragic things in life that the men of might and genius, the men who could conquer fortune or fame and win battles, have proved to be 'weak as other men,' defeated from lack of that moral element which is the indispensable of stable strength. You are no stronger than your moral convictions and your secret practices in the dark before God, and, more than most common-place people, you need the regulating regimen of earnest religion and the saving bracing grace of the Son of Man.

THE weak, in some ways, are often stronger
than the strong.

Victories
of the
Frail

Darwin did his epoch-making work in daily defiance of bodily feebleness. Stevenson wrote *Treasure Island* when too ill to speak and propped up in bed ; to the end he did his work 'coasting eternity.' Frederick W. Robertson illumined the minds of his own and a later generation when burning the flame of his own life in pain and struggle. It is said that 'many of the greatest commanders in war, by land or sea, have been men whose constitution seemed always on the point of breaking down.' It would surprise us if we saw some of the men and women who have

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done great feats for the world's advancement, and saw how they had to fight against some weakness and how their spirit conquered their frail body.

What men do—it has been said—under hardship and disability is often the best thing they ever do. All their inner resources are drawn out to meet the demand. The fight against frailty rouses dormant powers, accentuates and intensifies their wits and puts verve and poignancy into their work. Do not excuse yourself from brave endeavours by saying that, because you are not the match of others in natural vigour, therefore you cannot do a strong man's deeds. You *can*, if you have sufficient will. St Paul is the great Biblical example—the missionary who lay under some bodily disability yet did a hero's work, and 'out of weakness was made strong.' Where you have won the victory over weakness, just that point may come to be your point of strength.

**Stout
against
God** **I**N one respect the man of strong nature has to pay for his advantage. With that robust sturdiness of character, that iron will, he is likely to have a hard struggle before he will bend to Almighty God. The very thing that holds him erect and firm in the human conflict will tend to hold him erect and almost indomitable when

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the divine summons comes to him to surrender and bow low as a sinner needing mercy. Hard it is for such a strong nature to yield and make the child's confession of error and the appeal for grace. He is apt to be stout in his self-sufficiency, to stiffen his will and stand proudly upon his sense of integrity and virtues.

The Brontes illustrate this unconquerable defiance of strength. The Bronte sisters had so much independence and so little yield in their temperament that their adversities told sorely on their happiness and made life bitter-hard for them. Their brother, the unhappy, weak, yet stubborn Patrick, when mortally ill, refused to take to bed and give in at the bidding of death, and died persistently standing! What a tussle there is before such sturdy wills submit to Christ and confess themselves beaten! How difficult to bend and to cry, 'Peccavi!' If such is your nature, you and the Spirit of Grace will probably have a fight for it. Yet the men of might need cleansing and mercy as much as the rest of frail mortals. And to stoop before such majesty as Heaven's is to *rise*: you '*climb* to His feet.' Then, when your iron will and your natural pride of strength are conquered, what new nerves and sinews of manhood ennoble you and make you doubly strong in the Lord!

The
Brontes

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Man's
Extremity
God's
Opportunity

THERE is high truth also in the paradox,
'When I am weak, then am I strong.'

Men in critical situations, like Dr J. G. Paton in his dire extremities among savages, have been astonished to find that, when they were at the last point of stress and knew not what they could now do for themselves, they were upborne in a serene strength not their own and were given swift insight and a singular deliverance. In the pride of conscious strength we are apt to take liberties and lose our balance, to grow over-confident and careless and be taken off our guard, or to imagine that we can dispense with all prayer and the divine aids which the infirm require. But, when we feel our weakness and throw ourselves back upon the unseen Strength, the resources of the Spirit flow upward into the open channels of our being and have free course to buoy us up in surprising power. When you recognise how many are the risks of life among such subtle seductions of the world and the flesh, and how frail are even your best purposes, you are more likely to be docile and simple-hearted and rely on the wisdom and sole help of God than when swollen in self-complacent strength. This celestial factor, then, is ever to be counted one of the great secret sources of forceful character.

Be Strong 'Be strong,' was the rousing word spoken to the lieutenant of the dead veteran Moses, to Joshua; again 'Be strong' and very courageous; and the

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people took up the Divine injunction and echoed it, 'Only be thou strong and of ■ good courage.' Rise above your own natural timidities; pluck up heart for the fight; train yourself to do instantly the duties from which your easy nature shrinks; draw all your energies together, and brace yourself. There is nothing under the sun to dismay you, nothing to be afraid of, except loss of touch with the Lord of life. Both men and events bend marvellously and give way before the resolute step of a strong will and a manly character. Get yourself girded about with the belt of convictions and principles. Take hold of life with a firm grip, and learn to hold on: staying-power is the proof of strength. To the gentle, to the sensitive, to the impressionable, to the callow and the delicately-nurtured, let a 'comrade say, man' to man, 'Be strong—strong in the Lord,' and fight the good fight; for there is One that fighteth for you.

A Matter of Habit

*My soul is sailing through the sea,
But the Past is heavy and hindereth me.
The Past hath crusted cumbrous shells
That hold the flesh like cold sea-mells
About my soul.
The huge waves wash, the high waves roll,
Each barnacle clingeth and worketh dole
And hindereth me from sailing.*

*Old Past, let go, and drop i' the sea,
Till fathomless waters cover thee!
For I am living but thou art dead;
Thou drawest back, I strive ahead
The Day to find.
Thy shells unbind! Night comes behind,
I needs must hurry with the wind,
And trim me best for sailing.'*

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EVERY man carries his best Bank about with him. None other is so safe; none bears more sure and liberal interest. If there is some thing of price that we want to preserve for our life's benefit, our nature lends itself to us like a Bank, and we can 'sink' it in the depository of our own constitution. Do it, or think it, once, twice, thrice, and the tissues of our plastic mind and body take it up and begin to make it automatic; it becomes an unconscious operation, goes on without our choice, and by and by it needs no fresh attention, and may be left to sub-conscious agencies while we turn our minds to other matters. Every sense and nerve and faculty in our system 'grows to' whatever use we make of it or whatever deposit we lay up in it. The Bank
of Habit

In winding up his watch, in waking at a certain hour in the morning, in ninety nine hundredths of his daily life, a man is a 'bundle of habits.' The results are sometimes amusing, as when the writer, going up the steps of the British Museum on his

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way to the Reading Room, found himself fumbling automatically for his latch-key—his every-day habit in ascending the steps to his own door!

Second Nature It is 'second nature,' or, as the Duke of Wellington said, 'ten times nature.' We 'get into the way of it,' and some later day the question may be—how to get *out* of 'the way of it.'

But every one of these automatic 'ways' of ours was once a new thing, consciously chosen or sanctioned. We had deliberately to get into the way of watch-winding and punctual rising and unselfish considerateness and regular prayer. Sometimes a man will plead that he just 'slipped' into the way of doing what he did not quite intend always to do; yet even he was aware of it at first, and it is only because the beginnings were tiny and innocent-looking that he depreciates the consent he gave.

Moulds for Molten Metal In Lloyd Morgan's *Habit and Instinct*, in his scientific analysis of the subject, there is human insight in the observation: 'Herein lies the utility of the restlessness, the exuberant activity, the varied playfulness, the prying curiosity, the inquisitiveness, the meddlesome mischievousness, the vigorous and healthy experimentalism of the young. These afford the raw material upon which intelligence exercises its power of selection.' These fluid energies of youth are like the molten metal which runs out from a blast-furnace into moulds

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in the sand, which there cools and solidifies; they *must* take some shape or other, settling into regular forms of exercise and then into fixed habits. At first we have full power over the course our thoughts and practices shall take; soon they instinctively repeat themselves; the time comes when we realise that we have solidified for better or worse, in mental and spiritual as well as bodily habits.

WHY should we think so dolorously of this law of life? Like all God's swords of truth, it is two-edged, and turns both ways, working for good as much as for ill. It is a friendly ally that we find in this solemn law of habit, as it may also be an enemy.

Commonly, when men speak of habits, they have bad habits in their mind. As Professor James, of Harvard, says in his *Talks on Psychology*: 'They talk of the smoking-habit, and of the swearing-habit, and of the drinking-habit, but not of the abstention-habit, or the moderation-habit, or the courage-habit.' After a certain output of deliberate effort and a period of practice, the vital virtues become second-nature; we acquire the instinct for self-denial, the prayer-habit, the Bible-reading-habit, the purity-habit, the truth-habit, the habits of faith, and hope, and love. Our receptive and expansive nature waits ready to incorporate all such pieties and virtues in its fibre and spon-

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taneous movement. It is specially at the early stage that we have to bend our wills and drill our natural proclivities and watch ourselves with sentinel alertness. Time after time it is much 'against the grain' to keep up the good custom ; but 'the grain' will soon 'grow to' the repeated demand, like the muscles of a child-acrobat, or the branches of a Japanese dwarf-tree. Every time we repeat the exercise in self-mastery or honour or devotion, by the law of *vis inertiae* in nature the power to keep on in the good way increases.) e/

Dead Points There are 'dead-points' in our course of life, when we are caught in some cross-currents or unmanning crises, when we swing loose in the trough of the seas, unable to create fresh energies. At these times of pressure or relaxed will-power, we are very liable to be submerged and ruined unless good habit comes to the rescue. It is the momentum of long-continued custom that carries us onward across the 'dead-point' until we have escaped the stress of confusion and recoil, and rally our better energies of mind for fresh endeavours. No man is safe unless he has such carrying-over forces of accumulated habit.

The Quaker The Quaker phrase, 'when the spirit moves,' has its peril for us at this point. The Quaker-type of Christian shrinks from formulated routine in piety, and waits the moving of the waters before

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he utters his prayers to God. But must we suspend our godly practice until we are 'moved' afresh to it? We are apt to be the victims of moods, and at times we are out of tune with holy things : shall we, then, let those holy things go by the board until we receive a new inspiration? On the contrary, even when suffering recoil from the thought of them, when indisposed to pray or perform the other practices of piety, be doubly sure to keep them up without abatement. Even although you may feel that you have no tang for such things, down on your knees all the same, and *wait*—'wait on God.' Have you nothing to say to God? Perhaps it is from nature's exhaustion, or from some hours of vagrancy in the midst of worldly society, or from simple ebb of spirit. Still go and bow your heart before the Holy Place, and, if there is nothing better to be said or desired, confess your indisposition, and keep up the habit of godliness unbroken. For, if you let it lapse this time because 'not in the mood' for it, the mood will be sure to claim you as its victim again, and you will be more indisposed next time, and will drift away from the climate and influence of the Divine Presence. There may be little blessing in the act this time ; but the practice is by itself alone a safeguard for the future.

Matthew Arnold gave this principle its larger scope when he wrote :

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• We cannot kindle when we will
The fire that in the heart resides.
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery the soul abides ;
But tasks in hours of insight willed
Can be through days of gloom fulfilled.'

Let a man still go on with the routine of dutiful obedience to what he saw clear when he was at his best and highest ; across the level plains of regulated practice he will come again to heights of vision and receive new impulse of inspiration.

**Opiate of
Habit** Good habit has, indeed, its own risks. For those who have to bear much pain, we know, there is a sort of opiate in the habit of enduring the gnawing ache, which dulls the first sharpness of their sensibilities. In our respectabilities and virtues and pieties, likewise, while habit preserves them, it is liable to cast them into a somnolent state of stagnation. Or the crust of old and pious habit may be preserved intact when it has ceased to correspond to the current inner life ; the gradual result is insincerity and half-unconscious falseness. 'Lest one good custom should corrupt the world,' in Tennyson's phrase, lest it become a wooden tradition, there must be constant outstretching of our will towards new attainments. To keep the soul alive against the deadening effects of custom, we must be ever wrestling with our outstanding frailties, winning new victories by way of more Christlike living, 'going on to know the Lord,'

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and so rehabituating ourselves by new acquisitions. By this means we get the full interest from the investments already laid up in the bank of good habit.

Do we complain and grieve that it is so pitiably hard to overcome a bad habit, that our resolution to amend our ways is so often defeated? But in this there is an element of welcome gospel. If it were easy to overcome an evil habit by the resolution of a wiser moment, it would be equally easy for us to lose a good habit in a careless moment. If character were so lightly and swiftly changed for the better, it could be as lightly altered for the worse. If the bad cannot well be conquered without a stiff and long battle, the good in us is equally secure against sudden capture. 'Lightly come, lightly go.' It is by one and the same law that it is hard for the slaves of evil habit to acquire the ways of virtue and hard for men of good character to fall victims to evil ways. What is built up painfully and slowly through the length of a lifetime is clearly meant to last and remain securely inwrought in the texture of our nature.

The
Gospel of
Habit

BISHOP BUTLER said there are 'three steps to heaven—acts, habits, character.' And three steps and stages of descent to Avernus, also. In the time-worn formula, 'sow an act and reap a

Three
Steps to
Heaven

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habit, sow a habit and reap a character, sow a character and reap a destiny.'

Every man of us knows his own frailty and peril, and knows just where the general charge hits him and touches the quick. Let him yield to his weakness once, 'just this time,' and, next time, it comes with a fresh claim and keener appeal, as though it now had a lien upon him. The gust of ill-temper, the indulgence of evil imaginings and vagrant desires, the thirst for draughts of egotistic display and social homage, the appetite for intoxicants, is sharper and stronger for having had its outlet and gratification once and then once more. Passion, noble and base alike, grows by tasting blood.

'The natural blood flows into anger
And flows faster as 'tis tapped the more.'

It is one of those patent facts of life which everybody knows perfectly well, but which we are so apt to treat lightly and ignore as though it would not operate in our case and in the particular act or temptation of the present moment. It is written large across the heavens, and brother-men in the grip of some hateful habit, or drifting helplessly on the tides of their surging past, cry out to us to take warning.

Augustine in his *Confessions* wrote it as with his
Augustine blood: 'For this very thing I was sighing—bound
as I was, not with another's irons, but by my own

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will. For of a froward will was a lust made; and a lust served became a custom; and a custom not resisted became necessity. By which links, as it were, joined together, a hard bondage held me enthralled.'

Do we believe that *we* can ever be captured and held under a spell after this fashion? Like Samson, we are apt to take liberties with temptation, enjoy the fun and the hazard, without intending to go so far as to be unable to draw back? But what if the evil grows to be a familiar thing and the sense of danger becomes dulled? What if entanglements and the drift of our likings lay hold of us and overbear our weakening resistance? Habit-bound

'What if, habit-bound, thy feet
Shall lack the power to turn?'

In the hour when a man 'comes to himself,' his better mind may be able to indulge only a vain and vapid wish with no pith in it for active amendment.

Henry Drummond used to relate how a gentleman went to a London doctor for a private consultation about his health, and how the doctor declared to him that, unless he made up his mind and relinquished a certain sin, he would be blind in three months. The gentleman turned to the window, looked out with wistful despair, clasped his hands, exclaimed, 'Then farewell, sweet light,' and

*Sin -
giving*

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'I ^{can't} give up my sin,' turned again to the doctor and said, 'I *can't* give up my sin.' And soon he was for ever blind. This is the climax of human tragedy, when a man's will-power is so enfeebled that he is practically paralysed.

In many a tragic instance, the man, like Samson, 'awoke out of his sleep and said, I will go out as at other times and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him.' The shorn giant, drawing himself up to try his strength upon something, finds to his dismay that it is gone. Easy it seems to abandon some little habit, to tame and master our ill-humours and self-indulgent practices, to cease falsifying the truth or living irreligiously—easy till we try and begin defying our natural propensity. Happy for us if we do not find that the thin rushes with which temptation once strove in vain to bind us have become iron fetters of habit too strong for us to break.

Dr Johnson Dr Samuel Johnson crystallised the truth of the case in a sentence, 'The diminutive chains of habit are seldom heavy enough to be felt till they are too strong to be broken.' Just slender threads, one thread drawing on another, threads thickening into cords and cords into cables—so are the sinews of character formed through the gliding years, sinews that hold us with the grip of destiny.

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BUT this is not the last word upon the subject. **The Emancipation**
If it were, it would be the knell of doom to many who are slaves against their will and fit subjects for emancipation.

Is it self-contradictory to say after all that these sinews of habitual character may be broken before they become the fetters of destiny? Does it weaken our case concerning the stern power of habit if we say that it is not irretrievable, that there are forces within call mighty enough to conquer it? No; for these forces do not and will not come to us in mere natural course, and those are moral madmen who coolly count upon something 'turning up' to intervene between them and their natural destiny.

Augustine's *Confessions* tell us of his penal chains; but they tell us also how these chains were broken, and the power that broke their links of iron was, in one word, Christ. This transformation of a habit-bound slave of sin into a virtuous man of God is a moral miracle far more wonderful than any physical miracle recorded in the New Testament. When John Newton, the brutal swearing sailor, was changed into the saintly singer of such hymns as 'How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,' the Ethiopian changed his skin, the leopard his spots, and one 'accustomed to do evil' learnt to do good. And there are multitudes alive among men and beatified before God who

Moral Miracles

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have been emancipated from the grip of evil habit and made 'new creatures in Christ.' There is no cant about it, nor any fond fancy; it is ■ sure as nature's law itself.

New Creations in Christ That agnostic Positivist, the late Cotter Morison, gave away the most of his case against Christianity when he made the frank avowal: 'Ardent love, gratitude and veneration for Christ, when kindled, are able to snap the chains of habit, and sometimes prevent their being welded together again.' Explain it how you will—and better than staying to explain it is proving it by trial—the fact is certified that, when Christ is sought and trusted with whole-hearted surrender, His Spirit works a moral revolution.] Even drunkards, as attested by verifiable cases, have absolutely lost their appetite for intoxicants by this spiritual cure. This new stream of influence beats back the old tide of habit. The mesmerism which past misdoings exercise over your memory and will is cut off like a broken spell by a new and healing fascination. Believed in again, and again believing in the great divine powers, you have a fresh fount of life which sweeps away the past and the crippling despair which is one of the worst curses of that haunting past.]

Say not, 'It's of no use; I must just drift now, and must await my fate.' It *is* of use. True, ■ few soft-scented wishes for betterment are vain

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enough; the knife must go to the root of the matter, and, in a strange mixture of helplessness and trembling convictions and confident hope, the heart must yield up the battle to Him who is 'stronger than the strong.' That done, however, the miracle of grace is sure, and you are 're-habituated.'

SB PROFESSOR JAMES'S rules for this reversal of our ways are sound and practical. Prof. James's Rules for Re-habituating

'Launch yourself on the new course with as strong an initiative as possible.' Cut clear of the associations which may mean peril to your purpose.

Give public pledges and hostages binding and committing you; 'burn your boats behind you,' to prevent retreat in some moment of revulsion. When Dr Jekyll made up his mind to have done with the hateful life he carried on in the form of Mr Hyde, he did not destroy the cup and the liquid which enabled him to transform himself in a safe disguise. Destroy the cup and 'make no provision for the flesh.'

Habit Breaker

'Never suffer an exception to occur till the new habit is securely rooted in your life.' A single lapse is 'like the letting fall of a ball of string which one is winding up; ■ single slip undoes more than a great many turns will wind again.'

'Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make, and on every

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emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain.' The better impulse is not safe until it has been set to active work and crystallised. Go on and force yourself to act on it, even when something in you harks back. Every such action is a new victory won, and entrenches you behind a higher rampart of practice. So the very nerve and moral fibre in you acquires the new habit. Your trust in God and His Saviour-Son must be backed up by such practical aids and sensible safeguards.

Even those who have won the victory must take precautions against stealthy perils by keeping themselves in training. We must take pains 'to keep the faculty of effort alive in us by a little gratuitous exercise every day.' The easy custom and leisured ways of Christian behaviour may hide the slow sapping of our fighting force. Hence 'do every day or two something for no other reason than that you would rather not do it, so that, when the hour of dire need draws nigh, it may find you not unnerved and untrained to stand the test.' *

The
Evening
Watch

One of the fearful facts of life is the surprising resurrection of former evil habits after years of prudent living. A minister known to me was for a large part of his career a powerful and consistent advocate of temperance. Few know that, when

* James's *Principles of Psychology*, i. 126.

A Matter of Habit

he retired from active work, he fell a victim to intoxicants and not long ago died among the London dockers. What was the secret of his pitiable collapse? Not merely the unmanning sorrows of his old age which he sought to soothe with drugging drink, but the fact that he had been intemperate when a young man; the early habit returned upon him when the sentinels of watchful resolution and public service were withdrawn and his powers of resistance were enfeebled. Up to the last moment we have to be on our guard and to keep ourselves in good moral 'form' by regular training in denials of the flesh and of self-will.

One of the surest safeguards of all is to be found in whole-hearted Christian service, in active work and the great enthusiasms and endeavours which give momentum to our habits of virtue and piety. The one thing indispensable is that we keep our souls fresh and alive by constant prayer and communion with God. To keep touch with Him and the heart in perpetual repair is the one reliable way of securing that we shall to the last be habit-bound for good.

The Anti-pharisee

'Many young, charming people like to be thought rather wicked and dangerous and desperate. The less they know of real evil the more anxious are they to get ■ reputation for dark and turbulent passions. This form of vanity—well known to all persons who have to deal with matters of the heart—is no doubt due to the dulness wrongly associated with vulgar ideas of virtue and the respectable. . . .'

'"It is not genius that is so rare," said Goethe, "but sincerity." He was not referring to mere heartiness and goodwill, mere candour and straightforwardness; he meant the sincerity which enables ■ man to meet his own private feelings squarely, without fear and without hope—without the fear of finding them too small and without the hope of making them magnificent.'

—JOHN OLIVER HOBBS, 'The
Artist Life.'



The Anti-pharisee

THERE is usually some heroic man who is **The Play-actor** ready to champion the 'under-dog,' and to put in a word for the victim of popular condemnation. But no mortal has yet been found disposed to plead for the man who pharisaically pretends to be better than he really is. The snug affectation of piety and extra virtue is repugnant to every wholesome instinct. The 'play-actor'—which is the original idea of 'hypocrite'—deserves all he gets from the cudgels of the community.

There is another sort of play-actor, however, who is seldom dealt with, seldom even noticed. I mean the man who wears ~~an~~ affectation of religious or moral indifference, who pretends to be *worse* than he is, and who finds a little credit among his comrades under the guise of this inverted hypocrisy. The much-feared accusation of being a pharisee will certainly never fall on him, and he takes considerable pride in the fact. He is one of that unclassified type, the anti-pharisee, who

The Anti-pharisee

pharisaically makes a virtue of being the opposite of the pharisee !

The Pharisee Bogey But first a word about the world's *rabies* of antipathy to the unctuous pharisee.

This pharisee of the churches has had his due share of attentions from men of the world. Smart satirists in the press have selected him as the favourite butt of their running raillery. The stage has marched him before the footlights and exposed him, an easy victim, to the contemptuous laughter of the promiscuous house. And we may leave him gratefully to their tender mercies—when they find him !

But, for the most part, he is one of the world's bogeys. He is comparatively a rare bird. He is in the Church, no doubt, but through twenty years I have never, to my knowledge, met a man or woman within my Church acquaintanceships whom I could call a rank hypocritical pharisee. One knows numbers among the pious and virtuous who indulge in a little half-unconscious cant and humbug. There is more than enough of conventional formalism, hatefully artificial, yet not wittingly ■ lie. There are plenty who are not 'up to sample,' inconsistent, belying their good name, with a religion which has not worked itself down into conscience and bred a fine sense of truth and honour. Peter is common enough, but Judas is a rarity: and even Judas is generally

The Anti-pharisee

self-deceived before he deceives others and betrays his cause. Certainly there are strains of pharisaism in the mixed character of the respectables. But the man who consciously and deliberately plays a false game under cover of religion or virtue is comparatively seldom encountered.

Yet he is wonderfully popular, I believe, in the music-halls, a favourite with the habitués of the 'saloons,' with 'men about town,' and with all well-groomed Sadducees. It is not always the purists in morals who flout this offensive creature. Why is he the pet aversion of people who are no better than they ought to be, whose virtue is almost too thin to cover their nakedness, and who have no more religion than will marry or bury them decently? He is generally a scarecrow whom the enemy has set up in the fields of God, and as a 'fright' he is popular by way of excuse for the easy-going habits of people who feel relieved when the 'good' are shown up as pretenders.

Cecil Rhodes, we remember, had his fling at 'unctuous rectitude.' Was he not a pharisee of the world letting loose a gibe at the scarecrow pharisee? Did not Mr Henley blow bitter cold upon his dead friend of early days, R. L. Stevenson, and more than 'hint a fault' in him for having abandoned the wild Bohemianism of youth and turned 'shorter catechist?' In the same breath

Unctuous
Rectitude

The Anti-pharisee

he was making a frank boast of himself as still the true-blue honest pagan ?

The Pharisaic Publican One finds, at any rate, that the 'publican' may be himself the 'pharisee.' Men will hold their heads high, and tell you with proud candour, 'I'm no saint, and I thank my stars I'm none of your sneaking pharisees ; I'm a man of the world, and have done with the humbug of superstitions and old moralities.' There is no publican-regret about their avowals. They stand afar off, not smiting their breast, but smiting their thigh with the hilarious slap of self-congratulation. The men who are vain of their paganism, or boastful of their follies—what are they but another and perverted sort of pharisee ? In fact, the man who flouts the pharisee is often a pharisaic Sadducee of the pagan order. He has just one good point—he is at least 'no hypocrite.'

The other sort of Hypocrite **B**UT from this annexe to my main study, return to the play-actor, who pretends to be worse or less than he is.

It will surprise some innocents that such a man exists, or can be treated seriously. Yet he is ■ much a figure in every-day life in the world as his antitype in the Church.

Mr Richard Whiteing, famous for his *No. 5, John Street*, gives us a glimpse of this class in *The Life of Paris*, which he knows from long residence.

The Anti-pharisee

'One of the weaknesses of the French is a taste for make-believe wickedness, and they play at being naughty as others play at being good. Their Tartufe, for all he is a national creation, is no national type. To make him that we should have to turn him the other way about, and portray not a hypocrite of virtue, but a hypocrite of vice.'

Nearer home there are men who, after varying fashions, would make you believe that they are worse than they actually are. Most do it in lighter vein; a few carry it to the lowest point.

Augustine, now 'Saint'-ed, takes us to the extreme of such hypocrisy. In his *Confessions*, after telling how his mother's counsel to live pure seemed 'womanish advices' which he would have blushed to obey, confesses, 'I ran headlong with such blindness that among my equals I was ashamed of being less shameless than others when I heard them boast of their wickedness; and I took pleasure, not only in the pleasure of the deed, but in the praise. I made myself worse than I was, that I might not be reproached; and when in anything I had not sinned as the most abandoned ones, I would say that I had done what I had not done, that I might not seem contemptible exactly in proportion as I was innocent.' Here is the hypocrisy of vice in its rankest form. Who will say that there are no wicked pretences and perverted cant among the bad? But I am

Augustine

The Anti-pharisee

not thinking chiefly of this sordid class of pretenders.

Men who Libel themselves There are numbers who, more innocently, 'play the sedulous ape' to the man of the world. Such fellows palm themselves off as 'gay dogs,' thorough 'Bohemians,' men who have 'seen life.' I knew a university student who would pretend to you that *he* was not going to 'sweat' for the coming examination, when in reality he was burning the midnight lamp in the hope of coming out at the top. Others I have known who try to pass themselves off as bold, bad heretics. Of the same order are the men who delight in libelling themselves, shamming careless idleness or making an airy show of gay moral indifference. They have 'a jolly way of laughing at their own want of principles.'

This sort of swagger is carried on as sheer bravado—for the pleasure of appearing daring and independent, and of shocking the prim and 'proper' people. Or is it perverted conceit? One young man assures me it is generally vanity. Does it not give them the grand manner and distinction, and show that they are 'men of spirit'—so much more interesting than the meek and proper milksop?

Shall we call them hypocrites? They have earned the name as much as the pretenders to piety and virtue. But we shall not toss that ugly

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word at each other. Yet they certainly exhibit a queer distorted sort of play-acting.

If I could gain the ears of such men, I would whisper them a word of caution. I have heard it stated by some who ought to know, that the actor who plays the same part for long is apt to merge his own personality in his *dramatis persona*, and gradually acquire something of the 'character' he impersonates. It is easy to conceive how those who pretend to be worse than they are may, unwittingly, adjust themselves to what they affect. It may become second nature. Playing the gay or careless part, they may some day, when the tempter meets them along with the opportunity, find the affectation a very convenient cover for practising the part in real life. They have nothing of that defence which comes from a repute for goodness and the need for living up to it. The parade of moral indifference makes it easy for them to slide down to the level of their pretence without giving spectators reason for marking any change. Ask observers of life whether they have not seen men lower to the level of the part they had at first only played in pretence.

In any case, such a parade of indifference to things good reduces the standard of life around them. For the most part it may only be sham gaiety or a showy game. Yet their make-believe tends to lower the moral temperature in their

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'set,' and makes it harder for others, especially for callow youth, to live high and show their colours.

**In
Lighter
Vein** **I**T is often, I know, in lighter vein that this make-believe is carried on, and there is something captivating about it. One knows men who take pleasure in talking in cynical fashion about themselves and human life. In some such humour did not Thackeray wear the guise of the callous censor of people's foibles? Yet all the time he was assisting unknown would-be writers who were fighting for an opening and for home and dependents, or in sly anonymity giving street-waifs a rare feast in a bun-shop!

Some would fain have you suppose that, when they had done something brave and kind, it was from motives of sheer self-interest. With cheery, jaunty airs they disavow all sentiment, and talk as if they had no principles, no feelings, and were hard-fisted and hard-hearted. Yet, when some chum is hard-hit and down, or at home where there are frail folk to be cared for, they secretly display a true heart and an open hand.

R. L. Stevenson used to write to his friends as though he were an unscrupulous sea-dog or gipsy. And this was the man who held family prayers with his household, and fought heroically for a native Samoan chief, who, in his judgment,

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had been deposed unjustly. He merrily masked all that sort of thing under a gay hypocrisy.

Meeting such men, we may come to see through ^{The Anti-prig} their light pretence, and learn to discount their jaunty libels. Are we not disposed to half admire the make-believe? It is a sign of healthy instincts that our virtues are not articles of show, that our sacred things and warmer feelings are kept in the shade of privacy. Men like Thackeray and 'Dr Maclure' covered themselves with a crust of apparent hardness because they hated to expose their hearts to view. So far well. Yet this horror of appearing a prig is so extravagant as to be almost morbid; it is an excessive reaction from what our wholesome instincts detest, and it ends in another form of perversity. Further, indirectly it morally impoverishes the community by tending to discredit all avowals of piety and virtue.

I FEAR it does not all spring out of revulsion ^{False Shame} from the pharisees and the prigs. Some people adopt this guise rather meanly as a means of getting off cheaply from the moral conflicts of society. Is there not an element of false shame in it, an irrational shame over the disclosure of unaffected goodness? Are you sure that, in keeping *down* appearances, you are not making a timid surrender to the standard and habits of men of the world? If you confess to fine taste in art or

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music, why should you mask fine taste in morals and things divine? Is this what we have come to, that it is a shame to 'confess Christ' in this unaffected fashion?

I have asked a typical young man, a borderer between church and world, why men pretend to be worse than they are, why they often pass themselves off as having little or no serious thought or earnest Christian aims, when one knows that in the bottom of their hearts they are 'on the side of the angels' and are privately devout disciples. 'Isn't it,' I asked, 'wholesome reserve, a dread of priggish pretensions?' 'No,' he declared, 'in most cases it is only fear—want of courage!' They were afraid—he knew them—afraid of the contempt of their own class.

What is | It is somehow assumed that the temptation is
Taboo to make a show of religion and goodness. In circles particularly pious this may indeed be the risk. But out in the average world the drift of things runs just the other way. What is the accepted standard among young men? Every one who knows them knows well enough that the assumption made in a chance muster of the class is far from favouring high moral convictions and personal piety. It may be the tacit understanding that you conform to the conventions and go to church—sometimes; but conscientious and earnest Christian living is taboo. The current under-

The Anti-pharisee

standing therefore is not the least likely to tempt men to make a pharisaic pretence to piety. This horror of false religious professions is absurd in the present day. We should be glad to observe the same hearty horror of the real risk—the temptation to make pretence of being nothing and of having no personal convictions or high Christian sympathies.

Talk of religious pretenders! In the motley world we must look for more pretenders to *no* religion and for more hypocrites of indifference. Un-affected
Con-fessors There are sarcastic words always ready for affected piety and smug virtue. What is to be said of the reverse affectation, when men 'room' together or take a holiday tour together or debate everything over a common meal, and successfully conceal their better convictions? When you back out from some plot of evil intention, perhaps begging off from some shady escapade or from a share in a gamble, are you quite a man when you pass it off on some low or false ground and hide your real scruples?

These superficial hypocrisies are no better than religious hypocrisies. They reveal craven fear, cowardice, and false shame about the best things of all. They make it more difficult for others to show their mettle and resist the devil. Every little community needs men who, with perfect good humour, will stand to their guns, act frankly

The Anti-pharisee

on Christian principles, and *let* their light shine when the occasion uncovers it. There is nothing of the prig in that. In shunning the sin of the pharisee, don't run into the equally mean sin of the anti-pharisee. Be no hypocrite of indifference in this universal moral warfare ; be simply true. J

Distempers of Youth

*'Not by looking within but by living without
This centre of Self shall a man grow wise,
Let us, leaving ourselves, then, go boldly about,
And take part in the business of earth and skies.'*

—LYTTON.

Distempers of Youth

YOUTH will possibly laugh or else feel injured **Green Sickness** when thus assumed to be subject to distempers. And, indeed, the adolescent reader may be entirely free from every form of the 'green sickness,' and, even if not, he may never have diagnosed his case and discovered his maladies. It is true, none the less, that youth is often afflicted with distempers, very trying to youth itself and sometimes as trying to those living in the same household.

Talk of the trials of the older people! No need to belittle the sorrows and heart-ache they have to endure; they get their full measure of sympathy and comfort. But youth has its own trials, and they are seldom met sympathetically or even recognised at all. The biographers of the good and famous smooth out such wrinkled pages from their records—with a few exceptions. One of these exceptions we find in Scudder's *Life* of J. Russell Lowell.

Russell Lowell knew some of the pains and **Russell Lowell** penalties of being young. He had a sensitive

Distempers of Youth

and highly-wrought temperament, and suffered from over-strung emotions, morbid fancies, the fret of self-consciousness and shy reserve and an intense and uneasy spirit. He was subject to vagrant whims of feeling, to changing moods and humours, to irresolution and disappointed affections. Among the morbid fancies of which his biographer writes was his brooding interest in death. In his juvenile poems he recurs to that sombre theme and deals in its imagery so often that we are led 'to suspect that he experimented a little with the idea of his own death.' It is remarkable how often young poets are found hovering over the grave with morbid imagination; and it is one of the signs of the green sickness. It took years for young Lowell to get his tumultuous feelings drilled and knit into a resolute life's purpose.

The seething ferment in the breast of youth is difficult to describe because it takes such varied shapes and is generally inarticulate. It arises from the surging forces and the fires of feeling in youth which are the raw material of vehement manhood, strength in the making.

**Malady
of Self** I have seen it take the form of a painful and untempered self-consciousness. Its victims are haunted by their own shadow, troubled incessantly by their own appearance, peculiarities, or defects; they are shy and yet eager for notice; they are

Distempers of Youth

hampered by a shrinking distrust of themselves, and yet vexed to find that they are not wanted and used and afforded the opportunity to prove their capabilities. There is a little vanity mingled with their reserve and their secret fret. They have a vague sense of faculty and power, but do not know how to handle it, and feel as though they were being neglected.

Balzac, in one of his stories, says through the Balzac mouth of his spokesman: 'My father's discipline had destroyed all confidence in myself. I was shy and awkward; I could not believe that my opinion carried any weight whatever. I took no pleasure in myself; I thought myself ugly, and was ashamed to meet my own eyes. . . . I had a childish mistrust of myself. . . . An overweening ambition preyed upon me; I believed I was meant for great things, and yet I felt myself to be nothing. . . . I was quite alone, and bashful rather than afraid.'

Egotism, of course, is part of their malady, yet a form of egotism that is not ignoble. It suffers chiefly from excessive sensibility. How apt they are to believe themselves misunderstood, misjudged, to feel slighted, and to resent 'the hurt that honour feels'! You might imagine some of them to be haughty; but you know that, if they stand off stiffly, it is only as a protection and defence for their reserve and awkwardness. They

The
Tender
Nerve

Distempers of Youth

are likely to be of a tetchy temper, quick to be stung and to sting in return, because their feelings have not yet been steeled to bear the rubs which their seniors bear unruffled.

The Sensitive Plant How much some at this period suffer from morbid sensitiveness the hardy and bold can never understand. They shrink from pain as a sensitive plant shrinks at human touch. Their nature is like raw flesh or an exposed nerve, and innocent remarks or harmless raillery will give them hours of unhappiness. They are 'trying' to live with, and a greater trial to themselves. Their weakness keeps them from doing their best and appearing to advantage.

Jowett The Master of Balliol, Dr Jowett, in his 'Letters,' remarks that 'sensitiveness is a great hindrance to action—other men who have their own ends in view and perceive that you are sensitive will not desist from hurting you. It may be partly overcome. It has some compensating advantages. One enters more into the thoughts of other people.' True, when mastered, it gives quickness of 'touch' with all sorts of human feeling; but in the intermediate stage it often makes its victims awkward or lonesome, and restrains them from entering heartily into the life of their fellows. Let them escape from their own society and court the pain of the battle, until they learn to hide their feelings under the armour of a firm indifference.

Distempers of Youth

IT is a 'difficult age,' when the youthful take strange 'notions' and 'whimsical fancies' into their heads, let themselves loose in unreasonable humours and outbreaks of independence, adopt airs and fitful attitudes that betray callow conceit, and fret impatiently at the restrictions of the home or the respectabilities of conventional society or the claims of the church. I wonder if they realise at all how perverse these vacillations of mood and purpose are, how trying these capricious whimseys become, how much has to be borne from them. If you have swayed with these turbulent waves of impulse and self-will, is it not time now to be steady and magnanimous, to subdue your vagrant self and recognise the feelings and claims of others who, if not quite so clever as their juniors, yet have a right to be considered? The hard world will take the conceit and the volatile fancies out of you, one may safely prophecy as one has proved out of one's own experience; but it is better to forestall the sharp lessons of that severe school!

Kipling's description of *The Ship that Found Herself* is not mere fanciful fiction, but a parable of youth. In her first voyage her beams strain and creak, her engines and cranks grate and grind harshly, and it is not till she is well over the Atlantic that everything fits itself smoothly into its place. Lush and vehement energies surge in uneasy conflict in most of us in our youth, and we

A
Difficult
Age

The Ship
that
Found
Herself

Distempers of Youth

scarcely know what we would be at. It is a critical and a trying time. Well for us if we do not take some hasty or false step which shall leave us irretrievably crippled for better things. A young man must 'find himself,' find out his line of capabilities, find his career and rise with steady step to claim his manhood.

Sym-
toms of
Dis-
temper **T**HE distempers of the serious-minded tend to breed a disposition to self-anatomy and despondent broodings. There is, as we know, a 'green sickness' that overtakes the young in the form of callow loves and hasty pledges and excess of misery when love meets with disappointment. But there is a sickness of the mind and the soul that goes still deeper and is apt to leave a more lasting mark. The symptoms vary. One young man shows a morbid craving for the sights and sensations of the night-world, reads the literature of misery, not from any wish to indulge an evil imagination, but from a morbid pity and humane feverishness, and perhaps comes to see life and God's providence and the religion of all the churches through jaundiced eyes of utter mistrust and sceptical anger. Another shows himself hyper-sensitive in questions of conscience, haunted with endless scruples and self-recrimination.

Too
Scrupu-
lous Those especially who are delicately reared and devout, those with a feminine side to their

Distempers of Youth

temperament, suffer from being too scrupulous, worry over artificial sins, and recruit that class which provides the priest and other spiritual doctors with their chronic cases.

Starbuck in his *Psychology of Religion* quotes Self-dissection numbers of instances to show how this sickness is apt to infect the soul when excited to religious earnestness. 'I fell into morbid hopelessness and unwise self-dissection ; every imperfection I thought a sin,' says one. They analyse their own states of mind and moods of spirit so minutely that they cannot enjoy the assurances of Divine love and the wholesome interests of life. They consume themselves ; the mind gnaws itself ; conscience refuses to be appeased ; they become the victims of nerves, burdened with ■ strange and irrational depression. Such broodings and introspection cast a shadow over that sweet and glorious world of which Christ is the sun. The risk is great that they may, in a surge of recoil, pass by a leap to the opposite pole of despairing indifference, throwing it all up and trying to forget the sorrows of the soul in a jaunty and careless life.

IT is ■ fever, and will burn itself out. It can- **The Cure**
not usually be cured by direct treatment, nor argued away. Such men must be diverted and taken out of themselves. This sickness yields generally to Sun-cure, to human love and the absorption of

Distempers of Youth

active Christian work. Nature has a balm for the healing of the self-sick; but, more than anything, I think that work, work that interests and gives the heart something to spend itself upon, does most to restore the spirit to sound health and Christian restfulness.

Regimen Never accept the verdicts upon yourself which come in these seasons of brooding as final or reliable. Discount your doubts and self-incrimination. Don't believe the voices of the night. Such spectres of the mind are the brood of an over-taxed nature. Put pressure on yourself to turn the mind away from subjective questions, and push out into the objective life of humanity. See how whole and sane and natural was the piety of your divine Master, how He soothed His spirit with the afflatus of Nature as well as with secret prayer. Let your Bible still stand first, but wander at large also in the fields of literature where the poets and the historians and the better story-writers reveal the wonder and glory of life. Be sure of this, and get it planted deep in your soul, that holiness is really health, that Love is and must be the lord of life and is the answer to all questionings, and that what you see in the *light* is true and what you see in the dark is false.

Let not these distempers drive you to any mad conclusion, nor leave behind them a sour or sullen deposit. They will pass—let them pass—hasten

Distempers of Youth

their passing. Accept life happily on Christ's handsome terms, and go and bravely prove your weapons in the battle of the Kingdom.

Henry Van Dyke—as deft in literary artistry as he is earnest in sacred matters—has the right word for us in this region. The
Footpath
to Peace

‘To be glad of life because it gives you the chance to love, and to work, and to play, and to look up at the stars: to be satisfied with your possessions, but not contented with yourself until you have made the best of them: to despise nothing in the world except falsehood and meanness, and to fear nothing except cowardice: to be governed by your admirations rather than by your disgusts: to covet nothing that is your neighbour's except his kindness of heart and gentleness of manners: to think seldom of your enemies, often of your friends, and every day of Christ: and to spend as much time as you can, with body and with spirit, in God's out-of-doors—these are little guide-posts on the Footpath to Peace.’

On Living with Oneself

*'I have a room wherein no one enters save I myself;
There sits a blessed memory on a throne.
There my life centres.'*

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

On Living with Oneself

WHAT goes on 'when men are together' I have already tried to discuss. That question raises another by way of counterpoint. A man spends more of his life in his own company than with his fellows: on what terms does he manage to live with himself?

It was Sir Arthur Helps in his *Friends in Council* who first wrote on 'The Art of Living with Others,' and several writers have followed his lead with their own theory of the art and with rules for its practice. But the art of living with oneself has been overlooked; and this is by far the more important of the two, for I have to live the greater part of my life in my own society. Even when I am with my fellows I carry my own company with me. In fact, Myself is the man I am always with, except perhaps when I am asleep and am scarcely conscious of my 'sleeping partner,' or when I am so possessed as to be 'not myself.'

This way of talking has, I know, an absurd sound, and the case looks artificial at the first

On Living with Oneself

blush of it. But, far from being fictitious, it is a question whether after all I should think of myself as being only *one*. I often feel as though there were two or three of us. I am really, so to speak, a sort of syndicate! There must be, at least two of us, for I exchange ideas and have lots of discussions with myself. With this Twin-self I keep house. I play at the battledore and shuttlecock of argument and answer with him. I sit opposite him at table; if I wield the pipe, I have long smokes with him; I go to sleep with him, and wake up to find him there *vis-à-vis* with me. Sometimes I deliberately go indoors for a confabulation, to take council with him.

The Two Voices It was this that Tennyson put in more august form in his 'Two Voices,' where the two opposite minds debate the use of living. In his own lighter vein Mark Twain etched the critic within as 'a little wizened, pinched thing that hopped about his study and talked to him. Such an egotistical, deformed little chap! And with such wise, strange words!' So real is this twin-life that the Tempter, although he has called at the man's door and has been refused, prepares to call again, and perhaps again, on the chance of finding the other-self on duty and getting a hearing, as Balak's emissaries did with Balaam. So real, that sometimes a man throws the blame on his worse half for leading him astray against his wish. Even an

On Living with Oneself

apostle was treading on dangerous ground when he said, 'It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.' Dangerous ground, for it is not permissible to lay the responsibility of my conduct, as is sometimes done in business, on the other partner in the firm, for he is my *alter-ego* and under my control.

Once having had a voyage of three months' duration with a few fellow-passengers of different nationalities and ill-assorted, I can say feelingly that, when a motley set of antipathetic people are cooped up on board ship and unable to escape from each other's company, one discovers how unendurable life may be when one is ill-mated. But with myself I am mated perpetually, and must take the longest of all voyages with him. Since I cannot get rid of him, there seems to be nothing for it but to get on good terms with him.

Madame Antionette Sterling, as I happen to know, once had a lady, world-weary and self-sick, confess to her that she had made up her mind to end the miserable struggle in the Serpentine waters. The great contralto did not discuss the question whether one has the right to quit life at one's own choice, but quietly said (in substance): 'If you must do it, you must; only it will be nothing more than your clothes, you know, that you will leave behind you in the water; you will be yourself when you have thrown away your body.' Next

The
Fellow-
passenger

The
Suicide

On Living with Oneself

day came a letter from the distraught lady saying that the idea Madame Sterling had put before her she had been unable to get out of her mind, and she had resolved not to make away with herself. Just so. Not even forcible means can rid me of my own company. When one ponders over it, one is almost terrified to find that one is immortally what oneself makes one's own existence, that there is no escape from this tremendous gift of self-conscious life. There is nothing for it, then—absolutely nothing for it—but to be on happy terms with oneself.

**Afraid to
Think
Alone** Boswell was speaking to Dr Samuel Johnson about the pleasures of society. Johnson confessed that, when he first went to the Ranelagh tournaments, he was exhilarated at the sight of the gay assembly, but on deeper reflection 'it went to my heart to consider that there was not one in all that brilliant circle that was not afraid to go home and think, but that the thoughts of each individual would be distressing when alone.' Unquestionably there are many who have no relish for being much in their own society. Having no inner resources, they are seldom at home with themselves if they can help it. Their interests run all to the surface. They must always be reading a story or a paper or occupied with the world's affairs and sport. Their life is driven to the outside, in their flight from their own company. They cannot bear to

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come close to another soul without a veil of disguise over their real minds, and yet they must ever be herding together for protection against their own reflections.

How to live with oneself! It is an art made **Happy Thoughts** very difficult by the elusive nature of our temperament and of the guests that have taken up their lodgment in our chambers of memory. We see some who evidently have acquired the art, who, in the poet's phrase, find 'some jubilee in thinking.' Gleams of such genial thought escape from them that we feel it must be a happy thing to live inside with them; theirs must be a cheery fireside, with fine domestic harmony. Do we manage to keep things delectable in this domestic fashion? We envy them, we whose sorest troubles are with ourselves, with our humours and stormy natures.

TO live comfortably with himself—it sounds ■ **The Solitary** paradox—the sensitive man must not be too much with himself.

Goethe said: 'Were there but one man in the **Goethe** world, he would become a terror to himself.' None of us (I shall presume) has had to stand the test of solitary confinement. It is said that there is nothing so intolerable as this to the convict in all his prison life—to be in his own lonely society day in, day out, to see his fellowmen while at Sunday chapel or on parade in the yard and still

On Living with Oneself

Silvio Pellico be shut up with his own thoughts. Any one who has read Silvio Pellico's *My Ten Years' Imprisonment* knows how he hungered for some mortal to speak with—delighted even to get sight of a deaf and dumb lad in another cell with whom he could exchange the language of the eyes. Even a saint could scarcely stand this test of his fitness to live happily with himself, for to be perpetually self-conscious, to be over-much in one's own company, is a sort of morbid self-consumption.

‘Even in common people,’ said the ‘Autocrat’ of Boston, ‘conceit has the virtue of making people cheerful; the man who thinks his wife, his baby, his house, his dog, and himself severally unequalled is almost sure to be a good-humoured person, though liable to be tedious at times.’ Without saying that you must have a *soupçon* of genial self-complacency to live at ease with yourself, I plead that, while absolutely frank and conscientious regarding your defects and sins, you must not brood punctiliously and nervously over your frailties; you must accept heartily and humbly the absolving love of God in Christ for your misdoings, must forget that which is behind and press onward, must merge your life in the interests of human kind, must exercise good humour with yourself and take wholesome and innocent delight in living.

Irritants Some who are far from being bad men are

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equally far from being good company to themselves, because they have not kept the balance of nature, heart and nerve healthy, judgment sane, by sufficient friendship with their fellows and by self-forgetting interest in human life. Some who are morally good are, especially in youth, too neurotic, too full of irritating sensibilities, to be able to live agreeably with themselves. I remember a man saying in my hearing, 'I live in hell,' not because he had a bad conscience, but because he was so victimised by stormy feelings and morbid self-recriminations. To live pleasantly with oneself it is certain that one must have a clean conscience, free from galling accusations, sweetened with the grace that is in Christ; but something more may be needed. Much also depends on keeping a proper balance between ambitions, keen feelings, self-scrutiny, and hearty, good-humoured, self-forgetting enthusiasm for life and human companionship—in short, a whole, sound nature.

Yet it is indispensable that you should be able to look yourself in the face with some measure of respect.

General Garfield (whose words I have stumbled upon in the act of writing) had been elected to represent Ohio in Congress. Before becoming President he made this manly statement to some of his critics: 'I have for many years represented a district in Congress whose approbation I greatly desired; but, though it may seem a little egotistical

On Living with Oneself

Self: approbation
to say it, I yet desired still more the approbation of one person, and his name is Garfield. He is the only man that I am compelled to sleep with, and eat with, and live with, and die with; and, if I could not have his approbation, I should have had companionship.' It was this resolute determination to stand clean in his own eyes on the strength of his own independent convictions, this insistence

Self-respect on self-respect as the first law of his life, that made Garfield so conquering, so reliable, and so serene in himself. Not that he and we have done no wrong — that is not indispensable to self-respect; but, having done wrong, and having done the only honourable thing open to a true man, namely, made open avowal of it before a generous Heaven, we set our faces to the light, and stand on clear ground of honour again. Then

'My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne.'

Then there is something that shines in the face of that mysterious conscious One who lives with me — how shall I name him? Conscience, shall we say? — literally (*con-scio*), that which knows along with me; but that name is too impersonal.

'Hush, I pray you!

What if this friend happen to be—God?'

After an ignoble deed there is something in me that makes me feel a loss of height and dignity; I have fallen and shrunk in my own eyes, as Dr

On Living with Oneself

Jekyll visibly shrank to a dwarf when he became the ignoble Hyde; I have belittled myself.

A London friend in the commercial world told me how a certain business matter had arisen between himself and an acquaintance, a man of the world. The latter slyly asked, 'How much is there to be for *me* out of this piece of business?'—meaning secret commission. 'That is not quite the way I do business,' was my friend's answer. 'But nobody need know—no one could find out.' 'Oh, yes, some one would know.' 'Who—how?' 'Oh, there's one who would know.' The man thought he scented a religious reference, and became sarcastic: 'Oh, is that where you are—is that the sort of man you are?' 'There's one man would know,' quietly persisted my friend, 'and there's no person whose good opinion I value as I value his, and that's myself; I'd always know.' ^{'No one would know'}

It is what Garfield felt and said in his own different fashion, and what you cannot but feel if the better man in you is not drugged and dead. You would stand shamed in your own eyes. You would never be able to get that conscious look out of the mirror in your breast. And often, far more than moral laws or fear of men or of hell, it is the fear of this cutting look from the Twin-man within us that stands sentinel or establishes a judgment seat and bars the way to wrong-doing or visits us with pains and penalties.

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Civil War The tragedy of life comes when a man falls into self-contempt. When there is one long feud in a man's domestic life, when Self and Other-self are at odds with each other, the state of civil war within is intolerable. For this reason some who are lively enough in others' company have a bad time of it when consigned to their own society.

Hugo and Swift Jean Valjean, in Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, heard within him a sinister laugh at himself at the moment when he chose the evil course—the laugh of self-mockery. Dean Swift—‘a kind of leering, human goat, leaping and wagging his scut on mountains of offence’—made men laugh till they ached over his satiric wit at the expense of poor human nature; but, under embittering disappointment and the falseness of his life, he came to hate his own birthday and kept it as a day of mourning.

Flight from Oneself It is a glimpse of his recoil from his own face. We forbear to think of poor Judas, divided against himself, trying in suicide to flee from his own society. If any of you have lost the overawing power of the solemn forewarnings which you used to hear from the pulpit, you ought still to have some horror of your own self-conscious life with ■ schism or root of bitterness in it, that automatic curse—self-revulsion. Fear yourself, if nothing else. It is a wholesome fear, sufficient to bestir a man to get on peaceful terms with himself, with the divine in his bosom and the God behind it.

On Living with Oneself

TWO ways there are of restoring harmony so
■ ■ to be able to live comfortably in secret.

Some, unable to endure a clearer eye within looking and knowing and bringing shame, *won't stand it*, and so take measures to tamper with the Watcher. They cajole him into accommodating complacency; they seduce his moral honour, drug him, bring him down to their level. This is the deepest tragedy of all, the second death. Yet, strange to say, this Dweller in the Innermost is not so easily suborned or utterly done to death. Some who had won a sombre serenity have found him leap up into life again at the sound of some old voice or some touch from early and simpler days, from sweet youth and home. It is this that gives us hope of the worst.

The happier way of recovering serene unity some will scarcely believe to be better than a pious fiction. Yet the man who cried, 'My name—there are so many of us—my name is Legion,' proved how veritably healing and pacifying was the power of Christ. Jean Valjean, who heard the sardonic laugh within his breast, was saved from utter self-contempt by the love of the good and kind bishop of Victor Hugo's story. And there are multitudes of strong men alive to-day who can tell you how the Master drove out the insurrectionary demons by the magic of His gracious personality, how He ended the civil war by the conquering sway of His

The
Peace of
Death

The
Peace of
Christ

On Living with Oneself

love and Good Spirit, 'making of twain one new man, so making peace.' By the sure word of age-long human experience, this reconciliation of a man with himself is the Christian's secret. To live happily with yourself, let Christ and the Christian spirit preside over your domestic life.

The Religion of Sensible Men

*'A man's soul is sometime wont to bring him
tidings, more than seven watchmen that sit on
high on a watchtower.'*

—ECCLESIASTICUS.

XIII

The Religion of Sensible Men

‘OF what religion are you, Mr Rogers?’ a lady is reported to have asked the banker-patron of literature.

‘Of what religion? I am of the religion of all sensible men.’

‘And what religion is that?’ the lady asked.

‘All sensible men, madam, keep that to themselves.’

The same incident is introduced by D’Israeli in his *Endymion*, but is older than either Rogers or D’Israeli, being quoted by Speaker Onslow as the saying of the first Lord Shaftesbury, who was a deist.

Was he indulging in a mere verbal quip? Or was it a piece of nimble fencing, a neat way of warding off intrusive questions upon the privacies of the soul? So much it doubtless was—and something more. How much more he meant we shall consider immediately, but at any rate, for reasons of his own, he was deftly parrying the personal application of religious tests, cleverly

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avoiding the inquisitive discussion of his broad and superior view of religion and the vain dissensions and puerile categories of controversialists and catechisms.

**An Apple
of Dis-
cord**

You introduce explosives when you introduce religion or politics into mixed company. Is there anything in the world that occasions so much friction and hot feeling as religion? Because it is such a thorny and contentious subject, many 'sensible' men disdainfully give it a wide berth, fight shy of aggressive religionists, at best take only a semi-detached part in the decorous and conventional observances of the church.

But the very fact that religion is the cause of so much conflict and cleavage, far from discrediting its value, goes to prove how deep it lies in human instincts and how universal and all-absorbing are its questionings. Nothing but what is vitally important, touching men to the quick, can cut so keenly and sorely into men's life and relationships.

**How
Religion
Counts**

'Who shall decide when doctors disagree?' Because of the clashing creeds of opposite schools, each confident that it is right and all the others wrong, men of the 'sensible' order often hold aloof from religion, exclaiming inwardly, 'a plague upon you all!' But do they argue in similar fashion regarding politics, making the political wrangle a pretext for holding no opinion and

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513 taking no side on the government of the nation? And Religion comes much closer to a man's business and bosom than politics can ever do. You meet it in the history of your country, where it has played a larger part than anything else. It has been one of the chief agencies in the making of England, in the formation of Scottish character, in the founding and building of New England. In pictures in every great gallery of art it faces you with its appealing visions. Its threads of purple and gold run through literature from Dante and Shakespeare and Milton to Tennyson and Ruskin. In the cathedrals which you visit the religious devotion of generations of men expresses itself concretely in architectural glory. |

For better or for worse, religion has been the most vital factor in the life of peoples and individuals, and a man disfranchises himself and ignores the largest quantity in human experience if he passes it by with indifference. He cannot meet the social problem and its crowding miseries nor the interrogations of his own conscience and heart, if he takes no attitude towards Christ beyond a distant and benevolent neutrality.

Whether there be a God *who cares* about you; whether Christ be the key to life's meaning; whether the Story of stories be true or an illusion; how you are to stand on good terms with the Being with whom you ultimately have to do; how

The
Eternal
Question

The Religion of Sensible Men

you are to deal with the burdens of conscience and the outcries of the soul, and be purified from sin and lust and enabled to live the good life—on such profound questions you cannot afford to be without serious convictions.

CP
Every
Man's
Question

The disputes of the churches have little to do with the matter as it comes home to myself. On the great central questions raised by Christ and my own intellect and soul I must confront the facts on my own account. Christianity rises superior to every church, and, like light, makes its direct appeal to every single eye. If I have had an unfortunate experience of church life and professors of religion, something deep in me knows well enough that Christ has no responsibility for people not really Christian, and that He is the Best among all the good. Nothing rouses young men to revolt so much as shams, especially shams in the region of sacred things. But, if they quote these shams as their reason for holding aloof, they are merely seeking a pretext for evading the intuitions of their own spirit which pronounce Christ true and His message of transcendent consequence.

SPB
When a
Man
begins to
Think

Darwin, the Higher Criticism, the bewildering questions of belief and doubt debated in the public press, intervene to keep men aloof from the Christian career; they often create a dumb sense of uncertainty or a critical detachment of mind

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regarding the old faith. When a man begins to think, he finds the assertions of the Scriptures very extraordinary and almost staggering. I must refer readers to an attempt made * to meet some of these difficulties, and cannot deal with them here. But the person of Christ rises transcendant above them. 'That One Face, far from vanish, rather grows.' That vision of goodness still strikes its path of life through all these intellectual dust-clouds and carries its own conviction to our soul's sight. Somehow Christ lives on irrespective of the ephemeral questions of successive ages, still speaks to us in the language of our hearts, still calls us to forsake our sins and ourselves and follow the Christ-life. Something in us is an ally of His, answering His appeal as deep answers deep. We know, under all our dialectics, that we need not wait to solve all problems—doubt itself fails to solve them—before we rise up and live the life of His disciples. Let me make Principal Shairp's lines still more familiar :

That ~~one~~
Face

Shairp

SB T 'I have a life with Christ to live,
But, ere I live it, must I wait
Till learning can clear answer give
Of this and that book's date ?

I have a life in Christ to live,
I have a death in Christ to die ;
And must I wait till science give
All doubts a full reply ?

* *In Relief of Doubt.*

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"Nay, rather, while the sea of doubt
Is raging wildly round about,
Questioning of life and death and sin,
Let me but creep within
Thy fold, O Christ, and at Thy feet
Take but the lowest seat,
And hear Thine awful voice repeat,
In gentlest accents, heavenly sweet :
"Come unto Me, and rest ;
Believe Me, and be blest." "

Learn by Living This is no obscurantist policy. You are bound to take up your franchise in the world of thought and with independent conviction stand in the truth. But there is a loyalty of spirit to the spirit-of-life in Christ which wonderfully helps a man through mental perplexities, which saves the soul of him and prevents him from making religious perplexities an excuse for yielding to his natural desire to live in easy worldly self-indulgence and forget the claims of the spirit. The best light is to be had, the way will best clear, if you live the life. You will learn as you go.

Walking round Zion Intellectual interest in the countless questions that gather round religion is common enough. Men canvass one church or system against another, discuss theories and church movements, and argue in favour of one type of worship or belief that meets their taste, while only walking about Zion and telling the towers thereof without entering the holiest of all to 'learn Christ' by intimate

The Religion of Sensible Men

personal experience. Christianity has a thousand aspects of interest ; but, after all, it comes to a very personal point and makes an urgent individual call on our heart and will and life.]

LORD SHAFTESBURY the first evaded the personal question of religion by saying 'all sensible men keep that to themselves.' Yet *do* they ? Shaftesbury

Grant the inviolable privacy of the sacred things of the soul. A man is assuredly entitled to shut out his fellowman from the innermost chamber where he thinks his own thoughts and keeps his own altar. His deepest spiritual life, if he has any, is largely a secret between himself and his God. Modesty, like the 'fig-leaves' of the first pair, covers up the naked privacies of the body ; and there is a becoming modesty which makes the soul also screen its secret things. A veil hangs over the temple's holy of holies. Many men, of the reserved and 'sensible' order, resent the intrusions of the propagandist or inquisitor who would rifle their secret chambers and demand to know how it is with their souls ; its moods and tenses, in their judgment, are desecrated when openly exposed and familiarly talked about. Secrets of the Soul

One respects this silent secrecy in men whose religious life is inarticulate or whose temperament is reserved. Yet is it generally a sign of becoming Soul-histories

The Religion of Sensible Men

modesty when the plea is made that 'all sensible men keep that to themselves'? When Augustine wrote the history of his soul in his *Confessions*, when Bunyan and John Woolman and Amiel and Professor Romanes did the same each after his own individual manner, were they not modest or not 'sensible'? Jesus the Christ talked freely of the spiritual life. His apostles Paul and John and Peter had no false shame about the sacred things of personal religion. Does the difference lie only in the natural reserve of the Anglo-Saxon temperament, or even in a terror of hypocrisy?

Fig-
leaves

To speak frankly I fear that numbers of men use this veil of reserve and secrecy as a cover for the emptiness and poverty of their spiritual life. They hate to have a zealot peer into their innermost chamber in case he should expose their religious nakedness. Possibly they dislike having their placid indifference shaken, or fear being committed to the devout life by exacting pledges which would infringe their sweet freedom to live the average easy life of men around them. They pay respect to the common-sense pieties of social custom, but they shrink from the personal application of religion. Yet, if the Christian religion be credible and positively true, it must bring the paramount question of the soul's condition to the acute point and become intensely personal with every man among us.

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LORD SHAFTESBURY'S quizzical repartee **Religion without Label** evidently took the fancy of both Rogers and D'Israeli, and clearly it answers to a highly popular attitude of mind among a certain class. Did they mean that 'all sensible men' have pretty much the same 'sensible religion'—all religions, after all, having the same essence or common denominator—that they do not trouble about the differences between the various forms of belief and the isms by which people label and classify themselves? Do 'sensible men' restrict themselves to this common modicum respected by all well-behaved persons?

Such men, by the score, want no more than the **Sensible Religion** minimum, 'the religion of all sensible men,' and they decline to put too fine a point upon it. Some of them make it a rule, in any country where they may be travelling, to go to the State Church whatever it may be, so treating religion as a sort of national cult. Some, again, indulge the cosmopolitan idea that, since different people take such divergent religious views, no single religion can be the absolute truth, or can be of commanding and momentous consequence for a man's perpetual well-being. With broad-minded and quasi-philosophic calm, they fall in with the customary observances, perhaps 'holding no form of creed but contemplating all,' at any rate abhorring all extravagance and excitement while con-

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forming to the sedate practices of religion in vogue among sober-minded men.

Broad and Lax Mark the people who adopt this religious attitude. Among them you will find the superficially clever, the Anti-pharisees described in a previous chapter, the unthinking slaves of social conventions, and men of the world who desire a 'top-dressing of heaven.' But, if they knew it, they have no religion worthy of the name, no sacred and heart-tinctured convictions. They are verging on a semi-agnostic state of mind. If they should ever think out their cosmopolitan theory of men's beliefs to a logical issue, they will not long be able to retain an honest faith in their own religion as veritably true. Their broad and easy tolerance, with its thin guise of philosophic superiority, is in most cases the product of secret laxity and indifference.

The Test 'Sensible' religion of this sort will not hold a man in check in the hour of hot temptation when the passions are vehement and the glamour of the world around him is entrancing. It does not touch bottom. It does not make a man anchor-fast. It is too vague and emasculated to fashion his life or to possess spiritual power and saving vitality.

Personal *For Mohammedans* Mohammedans and Confucianists may be all that their religions require of them while only giving a general adhesion to their systems. But

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Christianity comes in the end to be an urgent personal matter ; it calls for individual response in spirit and will ; it has not done its vitally saving work until it has become a quickening experience and a life, nor is it satisfied with a vague modicum of religiosity.

Frankly you dislike the sensational and extra-
vaganant in religion. Aggressive revivalists and what
perhaps you would call their 'rant' revolt you ; and
at the other extreme the mystics seem to you to
'wind themselves too high' and speak a language
that is foreign to you. Is religion, therefore, to
be altogether of the common-sense order? If it
reflect Christ Himself, it will certainly be sane,
wholesome, reasonable. But His religion far
transcended the merely 'sensible' sort patronised
by 'all sensible men.' Bare common-sense failed
to follow and compass Him when He talked with
Nicodemus and told him that he 'must be born
from above,' when he opened his heart in the Upper
Room, when He agonised in spirit in the garden
and on the cross, 'rose a spiritual body' and shed
abroad the mystical gifts of His Spirit. 'How can
these things be?' said the 'sensible' man.

Scientific discoveries, like those of Galileo and
Darwin and Hertz in astronomy and evolution and
wireless telegraphy, are incredible to common-
sense, and the half has not been told of the mystic
secrets of nature. Much more in the region of the

The
Folly of
Common
Sense

The
Mystic
Sense

The Religion of Sensible Men

spiritual, in Christianity, we find ourselves in a mystical and astonishing realm which to the natural man is a foreign world. Its language sounds as far-away and foolish to him as ardent love-language to a cold and avaricious heart. In short, something must happen to him to give higher sensibilities than common-sense knows : what that something is we shall see in our next chapter. 'Marvel not : ' religion must be born again to you, a spiritual life conceived and quickened and brought to birth.

The Best of Lives

'As to the people I see, the best class of all are the religious people. . . . It teaches me again that the best of this class is the best that one will find in any class whatsoever.'

—CARLYLE.

The Best of Lives

WHEN the man's love-light is lit by *the one* woman, love reveals to him ■ new world, and adds another province to his life. What he smiled at as infatuation in other people has become the elixir of his own existence, thrilling him with all the wonder of a new discovery. He had observed it ■ a pretty element in love-poetry and stories, but now it is dancing in his blood, touching the world with colour and charm, tuning his life to ■ new motive. The maiden on her part had been callow and variable, with centre everywhere; but at 'The Coming of Love' a flush of warm womanhood mounts into her face; her nature develops, rounds and ripens and blossoms; love gives her a centre and a soul. For each of them this mystical experience is ■ sort of second birth. It would seem foolish and impossible for them to explain it to you; you must feel it to know it; and it laughs happily at cold common-sense, for it is a new sense.

The
Coming
of Love

The Best of Lives

When the Soul Awakes A discovery of a similar kind is made when the soul awakes. In vain we try to explain it; we have not any language for such ethereal things. We had known all about it in familiar Scriptures and beliefs; but it ceases to be merely objective, leaps out of the canvas of the pictured past, and comes to us alive and personal. It is both bitter and sweet, for there is tragic pain in the shame of an awakened conscience as well as deep-breathing gladness in the discovery of Christ. He singles us out, looks into the depths of our heart, breeds a new spiritual sense, teases and disturbs, woos and wins us, opens a new realm of life with an infinite outlook stretching through valleys of strife to heights of wonder. This personified Love invests goodness with a new spell, puts the old vagrancies of wicked desires under a ban, settles the heart, and gives the soul something to champion. Life is strung to a new and unselfish motive.

‘Love took up the harp of Life and smote on all the chords
with might,
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass’d in music
out of sight.’

Personal Religion In short, your Christianity must become, not merely something that you hold and observe with sensible respect, but something that holds you in its grip and adds a mystical dynamic to your life. It must be fused like iron ore and run into the

The Best of Lives

mould of your whole manhood; it is not really redeeming until it has become new to you, your very own, and passionate.

Is it permissible for young men to be excited about sport and enthusiastic about politics and art? And are they never to become excited or passionate about the sublime wonders and solemn glories of the Christian revelation, about the soul's fateful crisis, and about the politics of Christ's kingdom? It is not excitement that most of us need to fear; rather, it is the excitement of the new life that we most urgently require to overcome our inertia. By some it is called conversion, by others 'the Soul's Awakening.' Call it what you will, but be sure that somehow or other the Christian faith has to become a vital experience.

The
Ferment
of Life

MAETERLINCK said: 'We can thus be born more than once, and at each of these births we draw a little nearer to our God.' Put a certain chemical into the crucible, and it will transmute the very nature of the rudest metal. So can the entrance of the spiritual life of Christ recreate and recast the whole character of the natural man.

The
Soul's
Birthday

Cromwell knew this decisive change. Carlyle passed through something parallel to it after his own order, as *Sartor Resartus* relates. Charles Kingsley describes how, as he walked by the sea-shore and pondered his life, his heart softened

Notables
Re-born

The Best of Lives

and warmed towards God and in that hour of sacred resolution caught the passion for all things noble which gave shape to his career. Russell Lowell confessed to a birth of new soul from which was dated his devotion to the higher causes of the world.

83
The
Fire :
the Dove

Bunyan and Augustine and Paul represent a multitude who undergo a sudden and dramatic conversion; and such vivid transitions are still common and called for. But their revolutionary experience must not dominate us. It is by no means always a convulsive or spasmodic ordeal. There is no fixed regulation process binding upon every candidate for the kingdom of heaven. In some it is explosive; in others, as in the case of Harriet Beecher Stowe, it is an unfolding of the soul like a flower to the sun. The Spirit falls on some as fire, on others as a dove: it was like a dove that he descended on the young Christ. Do not wait for something to happen in you such as happened in the case of some man whose biography you have read. One could rehearse dozens of distinct cases, but not one of them would exactly answer to your experience. Work it out along your own lines.

Lowell Russell Lowell was once asked where and how a young man should start the study of literature. He advised his correspondent to start anywhere and trace out the chain of every reference, and, if

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he followed up the lines of study that opened, they would lead him on into the whole field of literature. So any one of the spiritual experiences and the various ties of attachment to Christ will do sufficiently well to start with—it will lead on to others in succession; only make an actual start to live this new life along some line or other.

The symbolic Holy City, which stands four-square to the whole world, is represented as having twelve gates, each of them a pearl, three on each of its four sides, opening to east, west, north, and south. These answer to the twelve tribes of the race, the typical varieties of religious experience and the twelve gates of approach. The Oriental sees Christ from his own angle; and the Anglo-Saxon approaches Him from another side of life along his own path. John sees Him emotionally as love; Paul as truth and power; Luke as the humanitarian and friend of sinners. Let every man of us come to the nearest point of contact with Christ and be sealed of his own tribe.

Twelve
Gates to
the City

text

SIDNEY LANIER'S finest poem he entitled 'The Crystal Christ,' and the epithet is right. Christ is like a crystal, with different facets that flash different colours, and the different crystal-gazers see in Him celestial meanings each from his own angle.

The
Crystal
Christ

Even after these eighteen hundred years it is not easy to say precisely what it is that constitutes

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What makes a Christian a man a Christian. There are so many ways of putting it. There are so many different types of the Christian life. There are such diverse tests and marks by which men recognise it. Schoolmen *et hoc genus* lay stress on it as true doctrine; Thomas à Kempis presents it as an incessant sacrifice of ascetic inward purity; the ethical modern insists that 'Christian is as Christian does,' so making conduct the measure of religion. No sooner have you begun attempting to state the essentials of it than you find yourself using sectional phrases and excluding somebody who ought to be counted Christian.

Focal Points It is a tribute to the Christian life that it takes such various forms and expressions and is so difficult to define. The rare and elemental things, like light and electricity and gravitation, are always hard to define and explain while easy to see or feel. The New Testament itself is crystalline in the multiform phases and lights in which it presents Christianity, often difficult to harmonise. The majority of Christians see it as a circle, with its centre at the cross and the Soul there poured forth in sacrifice for sin; others are shifting that centre to the incarnation. But is it not rather an ellipse than a circle, with more than one focal point?

Professor James has given us a very readable philosophy of the *Varieties of Religious Experience*;

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you read on alert, but feel that after all he has not caught and explained the secret of Jesus. It is worked out as a department of 'Contemporary Science' by Starbuck (*Psychology of Religion*) and Coe (*The Spiritual Life*), who collate thousands of religious 'cases,' analyse all the awakenings and distempers of the soul, tabulate the ages and stages at which the majority and the minority pass through the crises of religious experience, and map out the periods of adolescent 'storm and stress.' They show in charts, what we know otherwise, that the wave of spiritual awakening rises to its highest point around the age of sixteen, and follows those changes which are going on in young people's bodies when new forces are starting them upon the life of maturity, when the voice alters, when the volume of the heart increases and the very pressure of the blood is intensified. If the great spiritual transition—call it the soul's awaking or what you will—does not come about that period in the impressionable time of inward ferment, it is statistically and morally less likely to come at any later stage. These writers further enlighten us upon the reactions, relapses, recoveries and developments of the soul.

But, while they trace the phenomena which can be tabulated, they fail you when you want some clue to the secret of it all. You miss what most you crave and what the New Testament exhibits—

Prof.
James's
Varieties

The
Critical
Period

Visit?

Conversion

The Best of Lives

the living source of all this vibrating life. You feel again that it transcends analysis and explanation, that it must be felt by the direct touch of His Spirit.

Focus
and
Radiator

‘The soul sees Christ as the eye sees light.’ Undogmatically what does it perceive? Christ as the focal point of things divine, the symbol of the highest, the type of ideal goodness, the personified Love which compassionates and pardons at its own cost in sacrifice, the generative force or dynamic of a new life working for holiness, the assuring reply to our irrepressible cry for mastery over death and for ampler life beyond, and the champion of humanity and pioneer of the redemption of the whole world. Has any expanding glory ever dawned on human thought equal to this? It is so great that it must be true. And, it being true, we are criminal and fools if refuse its high call, and we incur the everlasting loss (‘damnum’) if we lose the great gift to men in Christ.

IF we cannot easily extract the essence of Christianity, we at any rate know well why every man of us should be a Christian.

Why be a
Chris-
tian?

Why be a Christian? Because goodness is the crown of human life, overtopping genius and glory and everything else of high price, and the Christian is the highest style of man, goodness at its best. Men are proud to be ‘capped’ for degrees, to win

The Best of Lives

some badge of public honour, to be noted for their cleverness or their success, to be remarked as cultured 'gentlemen.' But to be 'Christian,' to be sealed of the tribe of Jesus—that is the greatest of all sublime things, the distinction calculated to make us most humbly proud and everlastingly glad. No honour equal to this—despite imperfect Christians. When we ponder and realise what it signifies for this life and the rising range of the life to come, we know that this is the name above every name. No matter what banter clever tongues may indulge in at the expense of the professionals of piety, the human heart on every side pays homage to the sterling Christian character. In all your life, in all the world, you can be nothing higher than a Christian. The Best Life

Because, again, Christ brings you a personal power for living this good life. I quote 'Mark Rutherford' as an outside witness: 'I only speak my own experience: I am not talking theology or philosophy; I *know* what I am saying, and can point out the times and places when I should have fallen if I had been able to rely for guidance upon nothing better than a commandment or a deduction. But the pure, calm, heroic image of Jesus confronted me and I succeeded. I had no doubt as to what *He* would have done, and through Him I did not doubt what I ought to do.' Committed to Him by your whole heart's consent, you are Saving Help

The Best of Lives

wonderfully defended against the assaults of temptation. He gives you something great to live for. Love of Him forestalls perils and solves many difficulties in advance. He signals the way with His guiding lights. He—but who can say briefly how He acts as the better mind within us, helps us to hold on our way, recalls us when we have lapsed, beats down self and Satanic powers, and carries on the training of our character to the ripe end?

The
Larger
Life

He will add to your life, not subtract nor cut down. He is not a general 'No' or minus, but a plus that greatens and enlarges. As education or the key of knowledge open doors into wider fields of interest and power, so Christ will usher you into higher ranges of thought and attainment and happiness.]

30
Polarised
by Christ

5-11-19
Jan 19
Once you have encountered Christ and seen Himself, life can never be the same thing to you as it was before. It must be either better or worse. Like the magnet brought near the rod after friction, He inevitably develops either a positive or a negative in you: He polarises your inner life. Christ has taught in your street, sat in your house, talked with your heart. 'We needs must love the highest when we see it.' | We have seen it: the good Master help us to love it and live the Best of Lives!

The Arch-heretic

*' The world's no blot for us
Nor blank ; it means intensely, and means good :
To find its meaning is my meat and drink.'*

*" There shalt never be one lost good ! What was
shall live as before.
The evil is null, is nought, in silence implying
sound ;
What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so
much good more ;
On the earth the broken arcs ; in the heaven
a perfect round.
All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good
shall exist ;
Not its semblance, but itself ; no beauty, nor
good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for
the melodist,
When eternity affirms the conception of an
hour.'*

—BROWNING.

The Arch-heretic

THE worst of all heresies are the heresies of the Heresies
of the
Heart
heart.

The three great heresies are counterparts or antinomies of the three great graces. In the Christian scale of music the highest notes are 'these three'—faith, hope, love; and, like a movement in counterpoint in the lower stave, the lowest and basest are these three—moral scepticism (the opposite of the believing heart), pessimism (the negation of hope), and cynicism (the antipodes of love).

When the sentinels of orthodoxy ask whether a certain teacher or author is 'sound,' they always refer to his intellectual views and never to his ruling spirit. They reiterate St Paul's plea for 'sound doctrine,'—and to preserve unadulterated Sound the original Christianity of its Author is of incalculable consequence to human well-being; but they overlook the rest of the apostle's sentence and the other test of 'soundness'—'sound in faith' (not the contents of belief but the believing

The Arch-heretic

spirit), 'sound in charity (love), in patience' (the 'patience of hope'). We need not be latitudinarian or lax about the Christian creed to say that errors of the head are less momentous than defalcations of the heart, less deleterious than a sceptical distrust and bitterness of spirit and a disdainful snigger at the heroic enthusiasms of life. In many a case a man's views, whether sound or heterodox, are mainly matters of academic argumentation, manufactures of the grey matter of the brain. But these heresies of the heart are poisons coursing in the veins and tainting the blood. Men of the soundest beliefs may be as unsound in spirit as a cracked bell or an apple stung to the core by an insect or the chest of a consumptive.

**Heart-
whole** It is to men who have mixed much with the world and had experience of the sinister side of life and mankind that I dare to put the question, man to man—Are you still *heart-whole*? This is the great victory over life and the world, that through all the *mêlée* of the human struggle, through all the bitter disappointments with our fellows and ourselves and the moral order, we keep our spirits sweet and our compassions warm, and emerge from the confusion sound in heart, still believing the great things, and free from bitterness and cold disdain for frail humanity.

Work out the question in some detail.

The Arch-heretic

SET the mirror at an angle first to show us **MAN**
MAN.

Young eyes project their own colour upon life, and we all start with a great capacity for believing. It is an idyllic Eden innocence—soon, too soon, to be dissipated. ‘The eyes of them both were opened and they knew that they were naked.’ The naked and ironical facts of human life are laid bare as we ‘see life’; and this opening of the eyes leaves us knowing and sadly wise. In office, college, society and most other centres of intercourse, in the daily papers and in novels, a shrewd, dry, critical, worldly wisdom blows on our faces. Clever sarcasms at the expense of human nature and the infirmities of the ‘good’ folk pass for marks of superiority. High and heroic things we find distrusted. The idea that a man is acting from purely disinterested motives seems to be commonly discredited; the selfish point of view is gaily assumed to be normal. The Dis-enchantment

It is the ordeal, not of fire, but of Arctic cold. You get experience of the treacheries of covert knaves and the pretences of prigs. You are taken in by fine affectations and discover false hearts behind fair faces. You acquire the habit of discounting what people say and profess, and find yourself growing suspicious of their motives and learning a terrible and sour wisdom. The bright illusions of your early simplicity are scattered.

The Arch-heretic

The fine things, the beautiful things, the gracious ideals cherished in church and Bible and home—what has the actual world to say for them? Then comes the dreadful poisoning of your hearts with general distrust of everything ; then you are ready to draw up an unbelieving accusation against the world of mankind and hold yourself aloof and uncommitted to any one.

Leopardi, the Italian thinker and poet, turns from the world in scorn, confessing—

‘ Bitter and harsh
Among the unkindly multitude I grew,
Here was I robb’d of pity and of trust,
And, studying the poor herd, became of men
A scorner most disdainful.’

Rousseau, in like fashion, takes flight from the public arena because of ‘disgust with the real world.’

Lèse Humanité *Lèse majesté* is the one chief crime in the eyes of the Kaiser. But there is an offence of much deeper dye than treason against the person of royalty, namely, *lèse humanité*, disloyalty and treason to mankind. The King, the symbolic head of the nation—’tis a goodly custom to treat him as almost sacrosanct. But the King is the mere symbol, the People the reality ; humanity is the one thing, if any thing is, to be kept sacrosanct. The real high treason is contemptuous disbelief in the person of his majesty Man.

The Arch-heretic

The sarcastic Critic of human nature, appearing in Job as 'the Adversary' with his tongue barbed with suspicious doubts of a good man's motives, may be able to point you to many examples of mean pretence and so to back up his advice to 'trust nobody.' But this Critic, with all his array of sore facts, is a traitor none the less, and his Mephistophelian grin is his Satanic brand. If you learn to look with his incredulous leer on the glory of pure womanhood and virgin manhood, on the fine humanities, the unselfish motives, the heroic honour and magnanimous sacrifices, which form the better and larger part of human life, you are becoming guilty of high treason against your race. Herein lies the offence of 'railing at glories' (2 Peter, ii. 10). If one may adapt sacred words, there is a human parallel to the Third Commandment—thou shalt not take the name of Man in vain, thou shalt not slander it nor despise it.

Political apostates walk across our public stage to-day. This is the tragedy of their careers, that they have turned their backs upon the reforming ideals and the heroic schemes for social redemption which inspired and greatened them in their earlier days. They have lost faith in progress, in humanity, in high principles; they have turned back to Egypt, to the policy of expediency and opportunism, *using* popular passions for their own ends, prudentially making terms with the devil;

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their nadir is reached when they find a cowardly refuge in that distrust of human advancement against which their braver youth was a fiery revolt.

This is the Fall in one of its forms—when a spirit of general disbelief takes the place of the old ideals. And this is the grand victory of faith—when a man to the very last dares to hope and fight for the seeming impossibilities and takes a confiding delight in the Christian conceptions of his best hours. J

Life **T**URN the mirror to the next angle of vision, reflecting **LIFE**.

The Good of Life, the worth of it all, the reign of Right in this mixed world, the use of striving and aspiring—it is on this ground that we meet the chief of all the heresies.

**Soured
Lives** Disappointed men are proverbially out of humour with the order of mortal things. People who have come down in the world may be nominally resigned, but how liable to cherish a grievance at their heart and in some cases to vent their grudge on the moral government of Providence! When we have suffered injustice or reverse, when we have done our best and been displaced, when our calling is a misfit and we are never likely to realise our ambitions, when things generally have gone awry, how apt is our human

The Arch-heretic

nature to become acrid and our hearts to lose faith in the Good of life and the over-arching guardianship of Love!

It is the ordeal of early life as well as of the elder folk. Men who have had a bitter struggle in their youth, young men with highly-strung natures and the consciousness of power, who are denied appreciation or are cut deep by disappointment in the affairs of the heart, or whose hopes of promotion have been balked by long delay, are quite as likely as their jaded seniors to be wry in their view of life and their attitude towards men and God and all high truths.

The 'Sky-children' of our celestial ideals are a convoy of angels, and our skies are emptied when they are dead. That patch of hardness or area of disaffection in our breasts is very liable to set us against the very gospel and its calls to repentance and its promise of love and life eternal; even Christ Himself is regarded coldly when our hearts are frost-bitten with moral scepticism concerning the working-value of all ventures of faith and love.

**Moral
Scep-
ticism**

Men who have been thus robbed and bled of their warm-blooded confidences may, indeed, accept life as jauntily as others; they may wear an air of light gaiety and only rarely let the sinister accent of severity reach their tongue. Superficial gaiety is often a cover adopted to hide a scar.

The Arch-heretic

Men from
the Abyss

Maxim Gorki, George Gissing, and others who have similarly fought their desperate way up out of the 'Abyss' show signs that the iron has gone deep into their souls. And we can partly understand how, after sounding the depths, they never quite recover the vital resources of the heart. Especially where they have been deprived of the Christian climate and comforts of human love in their first homes, the very springs of nature may be permanently weakened. Yet they are surely bound to make a large discount upon their own experience and correct their judgment of human life and sacred beliefs by allowing much for the abnormal 'personal equation.'

The
Sequelæ
of Mis-
fortune

Certain bitter fluids in the body are necessary for health and life; but, when these are fed and drawn to a point, the result is the jaundiced eye. The blows we suffer may leave a hard spot in our nature and become a centre of malignant poisons. Here is the worst part of our misfortunes. The defeat, the disappointment, the ailment that unfits for the battle—the worst thing does not lie in these by themselves. If you could accept them and cheerfully make the best of the situation, the worst would be averted. It is in the *sequelæ* of trouble that the real risk lies—a poisoned spirit, a deposit of sour embitterment, a knotted hardness at the heart, a deep and silent underground resentment, a warped mind that misreads the

The Arch-heretic

Divine and the human Good and turns away with steely eye from both. That is your real peril and gravest calamity.

But often, strange to say, it is lush plenty rather than poverty or trouble that turns the spirit sour and breeds the heresies of the heart. Job in his downfall utters wild words against the world; but his book has nothing so acrid and pessimistic as the philosophy of life (in *Ecclesiastes*) popularly supposed to have sprung from the luxurious, proud and self-indulgent king Solomon. People who have had a hard struggle are often the most sanguine and sound-hearted. Those who have grown up in easy prosperity and comfort, who are sated with the sweets of life, turn the sweet to bitter and look on mankind with jaundiced eye. The poor are rarely pessimists; the poor have hope. The City Missionary, familiar with the worst, is often the most confident of both God and human nature. It follows that it is not merely a man's lot in life that poisons his spirit, but something in himself.

Robert Buchanan, Byron, Shelley, and Dean Swift make it clear that a moral element enters into the composition of this heresy. Their own habits, the lives they led, exhausted the sap of their natures. And many are bitter against the world and humanity, and disbelievers in the Christian hopes, because of some evil taint rank-

Prover
The
Sanguine
Poor and
Pessimis-
tic Rich

The
Moral
Element

The Arch-heretic

ling in their blood, some irritant of memory and conscience.

Thomas Hardy: There are popular writers who breed this moral
Ironical Fates disbelief. Thomas Hardy is one of the many novelists of the age who present and interpret human life—sport of the ‘waggery of Fate’—in such a fashion as to clip the wings of the ideal, and dry up the founts of faith and hope and generous enthusiasm. Exposing the ironies of life and the secret defalcations of the good, bidding you see how the fates play cynically with deluded mortals, they blow a withering breath upon the sanctities and devout beliefs that sweeten the world. The cult of Omar Khayyam in vogue among unbelieving men of letters is fostering the same frigid and stoical moral scepticism. It seems to be the special peril of over-cultivated, over-delicate, and detached students of life, shadowed with the ‘pale cast of thought’ and deprived of the corrective of wholesome action. Others like Olive Schreiner and ‘Mark Rutherford’ look out on life with great eyes of pity, and yet, as I know well, turn down the lights and breed a freezing disbelief in the Good as they exhibit the defeat of purpose and prayer and call life ‘a striving, and a striving, and an ending in nothing.’

Shakespeare and all the greatest, on the other hand, give a much more genial and inspiring

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impression of life, presenting the full drama of the world's tragedy and comedy in the light of the nobler passions, and disclosing the 'soul of goodness in things evil' and the moral strain in man's experience. Turn to your Scott, your Thackeray, your Browning, to R. L. Stevenson, to Emerson, and drink deep of healthful life and the airs of the sunlit sea. Such company refreshes the heart with the tonic of joy and confidence. We bless the men who, without any gloss on realities, sweeten our thoughts and stir our pulses and cherish our confidence in the crowned glories of humanity.

Shak-
speare's
Tonic.

DOES it matter *what* a man believes? It matters greatly in the shaping of his character if it be a living belief and not a mere tradition or convention, as I have argued in another book. But it matters not less, perhaps more, whether he retains the believing spirit at all, an uncorrupted sense of the goodness and wonder and moral meaning of human experience, an upper realm of light and faith in some form or other, with an eye for some celestial truth and a heart prepared to trust and rejoice according to that truth. Is there any calamity more deadly than the decay and death of the very capacity of the heart for believing high things? "

The
Believing
Spirit

'Upon the white sea sand
There sat a pilgrim band

The Arch-heretic

Telling the losses that their lives had known,
While evening waned away
From breezy cliff and bay,
And the strong tides went out with weary moan.
There were some who mourned their youth
With a most tender ruth,
For the brave hopes and memories ever green ;
And one upon the West
Turned an eye that would not rest
For the fair hills whereon its joys had been.
Some talked of vanished gold,
Some of proud honours told,
Some spoke of friends who were their friends no more ;
And one of a green grave
Far away beyond the wave,
While he sits here so lonely on the shore.
But when their tales were done,
There spoke among them one,
A stranger, seeming from all sorrow free :
“ Sad losses ye have met,
But mine are sadder yet,
For the believing heart has gone from me.”
“ Then, alas ! ” those pilgrims said,
“ For the living and the dead,
For life’s deep shadows and the heavy cross,
For the wrecks of land and sea ;
But, howe’er it came to thee,
Thine, brother, is life’s last and sorest loss,
For the believing heart has gone from thee—
Ah, the believing heart has gone from thee.”’

The
Deadly
Heresy

To speak against the historical Christ—according to His own surprising word—is a pardonable offence ; but to speak against the Spirit, to blaspheme the holy light, the good that depends on no historical evidence but attests itself ‘by the

The Arch-heretic

direct glance of the soul's seeing,' is a deadly sin. This heresy kills, dries up the springs, unmans, destroys the spirit of battle. The morally sceptical spirit and the pessimistic and cynical attitude towards the great and heroic things in man and God inevitably withdraw our vital forces, unstring the nerves and sinews of our strength, and tend to spread a stealthy demoralisation over all our better being.

Sensible optimists get the most out of life. Even the 'meliorists' (to use a term of George Eliot's coinage), who cannot see that all is for the best yet are confident of ascending betterment through the years, are justified by the return-value of their assurance. In believing the best possible you tap and draw the resources of moral force and spiritual grace that await those who are receptive. Your disbelief is a non-conductor: your faith is creative.

Optimists
get the
best of it

There, walking about in Palestine, Christ carried mystic forces of healing and spiritual renewal, gifts of good open to the hand of faith. These were chilled and frozen by suspicious distrust, like flowers closed up by the withering east wind; sceptical sadducee and supercilious pharisee, even though they lived next door to Him, could get no good from Him; their critical insensibility shut the avenues of saving life. But at the touch of responsive faith His curative virtue flowed out to

Christ's
Healing
Forces

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the healing of both body and soul ; it rushed forth to meet the silent appeal of the worn woman whose finger touched the fringe of His garment, and it dried up her waste and poured a new flush of life into her wan frame. Even those of our contemporaries who cannot credit the history of these miracles will find it absolutely true of life above and about them.

**The Law
of the
Pump**

Into the pump you pour a little water, and it answers you by giving you as much as you can draw. There is a law of reply in everything in heaven and earth. To God, to man, to life, give your confident trust, and there will come back to you much of what you asked, an answer according to the measure of your faith. Life is good to those who meet it with a heart and an eye for the good ; it is dismal, meaningless, fit theme for irony and contempt, to those who mete out to it their own measures of critical distrust. The world, the heavens, the Bible, the Christian faith, the hearts of our fellowmen, the resources of our own nature, yield up the best and the most to the believing and chivalrous spirit. 'We live by admiration, love, and hope.' Mankind lives and grows valiantly strong by the better things believed in, and shrivels at the core under the heresies of the heart. Faith, hope, love are dynamic forces.

**Deluded
Misbelief**

Are you afraid of believing too much and being deluded? You are in much greater danger of

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believing too little and missing the best in consequence. No one is so deluded and defrauded as the man who is sapiently parsimonious and sparing of his faith and hope. What can be true but that which proves itself the best for helping men to make the best of their lives? 'The most ingenuous hope,' says Charles Wagner, 'is nearer truth than the most rational despair.'

You are not better than the Nature of Things that produced you. Have you this intuition of the good that ought to have been, and has the Divine Order nothing equal to it? Could you have made and arranged things better than That which made you? This is the one thing utterly unbelievable, that you should have a standard of right and good higher than exists in the cosmic order; it is a contradiction in terms. That very reason in you which sits in judgment upon life and providence should assure you that in the long run All is rational and good—else you are the solitary and superior anomaly of creation! Your very clamour for a kinder and more equitable moral government than you perceive in life is a proof that ultimately it will be found better than you knew. Give God time and some credit of confidence; the final issues of our strange schooling will prove that He 'is Love.' Believe, with R. L. Stevenson, 'in the ultimate decency of things.' With Tennyson, 'Cleave ever to the sunnier side

Watts's
'Love
Trium-
phant'

The Arch-heretic

of doubt.' In the conflict of arguments, give your vote in favour of God. Light, right, good—name it how you will—is at the top. This is what G. F. Watts means by his 'Love Triumphant,' that Time and Judgment, Life and Death, and all dark things are finally under foot of Good, that Love has the last word of it. If things do not turn out quite as we have believed and expected, it will be because they turn out to be still better.

**More
Good
than Evil** In spite of all the bad cases we have met and the disenchantments that have opened our eyes to a dismal knowingness, there is infinitely more that is lovable and credible in humanity and the cosmic order than is false and disappointing. There is more that is heroic and kind and good than is found mean and selfish and wrong.

**Sweet-
ened
Marah** The Bitter Waters of Marah must be sweetened, and the sweetening agencies are within every man's reach. Numbers who have had the bitterest time of it have kept their hearts sound and believing. J. Russell Lowell, Mrs Oliphant, Stevenson—each having had irreparable misfortune—proved it possible. Lowell wrote: 'I have had my share of bitter experiences like the rest, but they have left no black behind them in my blood.' Multitudes more spiritually Christian, knowing the great secret, have shown that neither life nor death, neither tribulation nor distress, need 'separate us from the love of God.' Get the warp out which misfortune may

The Arch-heretic

have given to your judgment. Refuse to let the wry things of the world spoil the bloom of your nature. God helping you, you will not permit hate and anger and suspicion and sceptical disbelief to lodge in you their poison of treasonable heresies. You have won the battle of life to a large extent if you come out of it heart-whole, and, notwithstanding the scars and the nail-prints, sound in the spirit of your mind. How sound and whole, sane and sweet of heart, was He who saw all the worst in the world and suffered the heaviest wrong and yet believed in man and by mutual faith uplifted men !

Matthew Arnold has described how, before Christ came, 'on that hard Roman world disgust and secret loathing fell, deep weariness and sated lust.' With the entrance of the gospel of Love and Hope there came a new burst of vital energy with the freshening of the human spirit, and a new era of history. For the like poison in our spirits, there is the like antidote, if we will but humble ourselves to receive and use it. After all, the real 'root of bitterness' is sin. Get the sense of sin obliterated by love's pardoning treatment; let your heart be softened by the brooding kindness of the Divine Heart; let Christ enter royally into your life with His sunshine and sing His hopes into your ear. Let all available human love at the same time be sought and cultivated. Turn your

The
Coming
of Love

The Arch-heretic

inward eye to the many green pastures where your thoughts can find their resting-ground. Not least important, engage yourself heartily in some good cause, get into action, share the battle of mankind, and so invest your interest in life and man ; such active service is most wholesome and enlarging. By such means the bitterness and heresies of the heart will be silently banished, life will become the grand opportunity of learning and serving, and your spirit will be kept sweet and sound.

The Original Idiot

'The noblest motive is the public good.'

—VIRGIL.

*'We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are noble
still,*

And myself have awaked, as it seems, to the better mind ;

It is better to fight for the good than to rail at the ill ;

I have felt with my native land, I am one with my kind.'

—TENNYSON.

The Original Idiot

MANY a familiar word, if we open it out and trace its origin, becomes an avenue widening before us into a field of history. Draw forth its root-meaning, and its roots are found to be tangled with some national event or racial custom.

Find the original of 'idiot,' and you find yourself in an ancient State, one of those small compact countries which, like Britain, have been in turn the little mothers of big and far-scattered race-children. Greece, like Jerusalem, like Palestine, is 'the mother of us all.' We cannot go far in the study of politics, art, or philosophy without arriving in that land of fountains, Greece, that land which bred and nursed immortal thought-children, which created our standard types and ideals.

In Greece, the State absorbed each individual resident, and its claims were the first charge upon his services. The State did not exist for the citizen, but the citizen for the State. To its rights and corporate life his own life was subordinate. Of course, his own private affairs ('τὰ ἴδια') legi-

The
Origin
of 'Idiot'

Greek
Citizen-
ship

The Original Idiot

timately claimed him; but, if he confined his interest to his own claims and took no active concern with the public service of the commonwealth, he was regarded as a civic defaulter. There was a touch of contempt in the name with which he was branded—'idiotes,' the small-minded individual who lived for his own 'private' advantage, who, to translate it into modern phrase, minded 'Number One,' and cared little for the Whole. He, according to the Greek standard, was no citizen, no man.

Public
Souls

Old Bishop Hacket, as quoted by Coleridge, ~~coined a fitting name to be set over against~~ 'idiotes.' He complained of the lack of 'public souls,' in his day. 'We want public souls. There is no sin or abuse in the world that affects my soul so much. All men are seeking their own,' ~~which phrase exactly characterises the original~~ 'idiotai.' One of the revivals we want to-day, as much as Bishop Hacket wanted it, is a revival of the Greek sense of patriotic and responsible citizenship, converting the 'idiots' of our land into 'public souls.'

The
Modern
'Idiot'

The Greek 'idiot' of to-day may be personally a model of all the virtues, and not in the least degree selfish in private life. With his warm domestic and sociable instincts, he looks well to his own nest and to all pleasant acquaintanceships. But he has the typical 'suburban' soul—suburban

The Original Idiot

to the great City of Humanity. His life travels along just two or three main roads—one to his chambers or office in the morning and home again at sundown, another possibly to his place of worship with more or less regularity, the other perhaps to public halls of entertainment or the houses of his friends. The great Christian causes of the world and the community have his benevolent patronage—from a distance. Education, municipal life, the management of hospitals and public libraries and the parish poor—let those aggressive individuals who like prominence and fighting attend to such thankless tasks and public services; he for his part has neither inclination nor time for them. He gets as much out of the competitive world as he can earn for himself and his own folk, and lets the world swing along its own course. He is a mere resident scarcely deserving the name of citizen.

‘Little Englanders,’ whether they do or do not merit the opprobrium which they receive, may be deficient in imperial imagination and the imperial soul. But many of those who fling out the accusing phrase at others are themselves ‘Little Suburbans,’ deficient in civic soul, as though they had no vested stake in the community and no interests to serve beyond their own business, profession, family, culture, pleasure, or salvation.

The Original Idiot

Great
Causes
make
Great
Character

THE Greek did not consider a man truly educated unless he had taken his share in the public life of the State. It is worth noting incidentally that Peter and John, in their bold defence before the authorities (Acts iv. 13), were thought to be 'idiotai,' 'unlearned' and untrained laymen. The service of the State was in Greek eyes the real Public School. It was educational, and developed the larger manhood. And it is most notable that the heroic men of history in many cases have really been *made* by being drawn out of themselves to lend their aid to some great national movement or social cause.

Slave-
made
Heroes

Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Russell Lowell received their public call at the challenge of the abolition cause, and that cause reacted on them and immensely greatened them. The cry of the slave wrung their withers, stirred their magnanimity, evoked their latent powers, and magnified their mental and moral stature. Read Russell

Lowell

Lowell's Life, and you observe that the emancipation campaign fused his callow energies, and, by giving him a heroic cause to live for, became the creative agency of his best manhood as it also impassioned his strongest poetry.

Wendell
Phillips

Wendell Phillips in his student days at Harvard was an elegant patrician, a refined scholar, golden-tongued, enjoying ease and cultured society to his full content. But, as George W. Curtis tells us,

The Original Idiot

one October day he saw Lloyd Garrison, the abolitionist, assailed, kicked, dragged to gaol by a furious mob for saying that a man's (and therefore a slave's) right to liberty was inherent and inalienable. That sight, the cause at stake, laid hold of his heart-strings. 'With the setting of that October sun vanished for ever the career of prosperous ease, the gratification of ordinary ambition.' His private interests were consumed in his public passion, which amplified his powers of intellect and gifts of eloquence, and, through years of obloquy and victorious conflict, raised him at last to the pinnacle of greatness and fame.

Your private soul draws new breath and vigour from the possession of a public soul, and your spiritual life expands and ripens when you find a career of Christian or social service in the world, the Church, or mission enterprise at home or abroad. For the reflex gain that comes to those who 'seek first the kingdom' of divine and human righteousness, if for no higher reason, we may well 'give ourselves royally' and lend our lives out. By this means we win a larger enfranchisement.

But there is a prior and loftier reason for the citizen-soul.

Is it not a curious fact that, when unselfish interest in others is proclaimed as the crown and glory of the Christ-life, it is almost always on the individualist basis, as between individual and

Service

The
Private
Soul
Enlarged

The Original Idiot

individual? It is more than time now to widen the range of this Christian altruism and call for unselfish and magnanimous interest in the larger man, the community. Owing to their circumstances, many are unable to find time and means of taking the active share in the civic work which Greece demanded of her citizens. But something more important than that every man can do.

The Soul
of the
Nation

THE soul and salvation of the community and the race must be counted as important as the individual soul: more so, indeed, in that multitudes of individuals have their souls blighted and almost fore-closed against salvation by the taints and temptations which the community has allowed to flourish, making early victims of them. Do we anxiously care for that public soul and its moral health?

What General Booth called a 'nervous system for the community' is the indispensable condition of sound life. One of our sore needs is a corporate or social consciousness, with nerves of conscience and sensibilities of heart quick to all ill and good, progress and degeneracy, in the country and the people's life. If we had a public soul, a family pride or shame in the rise or fall of our race and community, everything touching the commonweal should touch us keenly.

The Original Idiot

Africa has meant for many white men nothing more than gold mines, cheap black labour, land companies, elephant tusks, and markets for their goods. They exploit it with a single eye to the white investors' enrichment. Do many of them think at all of the moral and civic bearings of proposed political or military moves? Have they public soul enough to care how it may affect the morals of the camp, the domestic life of the black or the yellow man, the general advancement of the race and community? Are you not charged with 'unctuous rectitude' if you challenge them on the humanitarian side of the question and the higher life of the people? With brave exceptions, they see the matter only from the point of view of commercial gain or national expansion. Turn to the typical contrast.

David Livingstone, statesman as well as missionary, opened the Dark Continent to trade and civilisation as well as to the gospel; but poor enslaved Africa was graven on his *heart*, the burden of his conscience, and among the last words written by his weary hand before he sunk lonely in death was the compassionate benediction, 'God bless all men who in any way help to heal this open sore of the world!'

Bring home this contrast to our own land. What are young men taught in the press and social intercourse to regard as the standard and

Africa :
to the
Investor

To Liv-
ingstone

The Test
of Public
Policy

The Original Idiot

test of public right in politics and civic policy? When the fiscal question, the education question, the question of conscription, or the licensing question comes to the front, which is the first and weightier consideration with most citizens how it will affect their party and trade, or how it will improve or injure the welfare and *morale* of the populace?

It is not any particular policy or set of political opinions that is in question—with such opinions I take nothing to do here; it is a *spirit*, a question of public-spirited conscience for humanity. If only the spirit animating the citizen mind be soundly Christian, all else may be left to work itself out for the common good in the course of time.

Party Interests Party politics of the fiery fighting sort excite multitudes who show no large-hearted and liberal-minded loyalty to humanity. 'My party through thick and thin' is sworn to as the sum and substance of many a citizen's interest in public life. But what of that corporate well-being which overtops all partisan wrangles and pettinesses? Will our public action leave the weak to be exploited by the mighty and avaricious? Will it subject classes of our fellow-creatures to a harder lot, or cost men's life's blood or women's virtue?

The Press Not after this fashion are public affairs regarded by many organs of worldly opinion in the press—

The Original Idiot

papers that infect the minds of readers with sinister and calculating motives under cover of fine-spun pretences. The very fact that many laugh at this way of looking at public affairs only goes to show how far they have lost public soul and care only for their private interest or party.

Private 'idiot' interest domineers over our national and social well-being on every side of us. It becomes piratical and heartless in those Trusts and Combines which 'hold up' and throttle the smaller merchant and defy the free play of economic laws in the movement of business. It accepts profit from the overcrowded rookeries and slum-property in which in London alone nearly 400,000 human beings are living below the Plimsoll line of decency, breeding disease together with vice and crime, while the owners live at a safe distance in comfort and perhaps piety!

5/3 T The liquor-factors and their allies and victims cost Great Britain, in various ways, a million pounds sterling every day of the year (excepting Sunday). The drink trade has its hand in all the other evils that afflict our race, manufacturing most of the crime, most of the insanity, most of the misery and pauperism, and catering for and drugging the captives of vice. It is the most prolific mother of moral, physical, and domestic ruin. Mr Charles Booth, one of the true public souls entitled to speak, speaks of 'drink in all its

Trusts
and
Slums

The
Liquor
Vampire

The Original Idiot

combinations adding to every trouble, undermining every effort after good, destroying the home and cursing the lives of young children.' Its producers and merchants may be generous and kind in other directions, and may plead that they only supply a public want. Yet do they never see in visions of the night, do they never see like moving designs on the table-cloth on which their viands stand, a procession of men and women and young people passing in and out of the swing-doors on the sordid way from the drink bar to broken homes, shame, misery, the den of vice, the workhouse, the gaol, and the grave?

**The
Drink
Dictator-
ship**

They, with their expenditure exceeding the whole national revenue, with their powerful trade organisation and their strong representation in parliaments, are dictators to the legislature and will master the nation if the nation fails to master them. Private vested interests—which blind their moral vision—override their human instincts and all consideration of the commonweal. 'Vested interests'! Are not human beings, homes, purity, health, national character the supreme vested interests dear to every public soul and entitled to outweigh all private or trade interests? Yet it is not they themselves that stand alone responsible for this menace to the public liberties; it is apathetic public opinion. The citizens could, at least, mitigate the evil if they had civic conscience

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and Christian enthusiasms. It is, in Mr H. G. Wells' phrase, 'simply the work of the worst devil of all—moral apathy.'

THE function of the stalwart Hebrew prophets was to act as a public conscience and deliver God's view of the nation's movements. Amos smote the comfortable respectables of the nation with the sword of his tongue because they saw the misery and degeneracy of the people and cared not a jot, because they 'drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the chief ointments, but they are not grieved at the affliction of Joseph.' The Old Testament throbs and rings with clarion outcries against the public and social evils among rulers and people in the land. If preachers were to speak out as plainly on current public affairs involving moral issues to-day as the Old Testament prophets spoke, there would be shocks in the pew and martyrs in the pulpit!

The New Testament, in contrast with the Old, has little or nothing in it about civic duty and the corporate life and public policy. But this is only because, within the period covered by the New Testament writings, the Christians were scattered units or groups, and Christianity had not had time to lay hold of the larger common life of cities and nations and play its part in society and the councils of state as the law-giver of the world.

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Christ's Standard Christ did not make pronouncements upon social or public questions, so far as the records show. And some pious people carry on their spiritual self-culture aloof from the citizen's province, on the theory that the child of God must 'come out from among them' and be wholly separate from the world. But Christ, at any rate, proclaimed principles which, if fully applied, would determine many a public and social issue. The Lord's Supper, setting master and slave together as brethren, and the Golden Rule create an ideal of human brotherhood and a spirit of humanity and justice which potentially settle many a social question and industrial problem. He, by all His sacrificial life, by the new value He set upon every son of man, has erected an ethical and altruistic standard for most public movements and policies.

Christianised Civic Conscience We may or may not disestablish this State Church or that; but we cannot disestablish and dislodge the Christian standard and test which now measures all our legislation and social action. It must answer at His bar, even now and here. Whatever is condemned by the enlightened conscience of the best within the Christian community is already foredoomed. It may make a stubborn fight for its life, and may win the fight to-day and to-morrow. But it has had notice to quit, and in due season it must surrender and vanish.

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Gladstone in his first public speech put in a good word for the slavery in which his ancestral family had had a share. It was commercially defensible, and it had its victories. But the Christianised conscience had become sensitised on the slave question. The Christian ideal of manhood, operating on the minds of men outside organised churches as much as within them, pronounced sentence of expulsion upon the institution, and, despite economics and private interests, it had to go.

So must it, so will it, be with many powerful evils of the present day that batten on the health and character of the common race, that enslave weak strugglers for life and victims of greed. But victory will not come automatically and without conflict and sacrifice. It is a war to which young men with the heroic soul and the spirit of battle may rightly be expected to gird themselves. Christian and civic causes call for spokesmen, for good-humoured and manly champions in social intercourse as well as in the fields of public and Christian service.

Read in their lives what F. Crossley did in Manchester and what J. Balfour did in Liverpool, outside their business province, by way of raising the common people's life and providing wholesome and educational interests for the stray denizens of the city. See what 'Varsity men are doing in Settlements, what workers are doing for lads in

Gladstone
and
Slavery

The Call
to Battle

The
Great
Career in
Social
Service

The Original Idiot

brigades and a hundred other ways, and be no longer mere drawing-room 'wall-flowers' and detached spectators applauding what brave men are vicariously doing. A career is open to you in some Christian or social line, a career that will give bulk to your manhood as it will add joyous power to your spiritual life. Let no craven surrender to the easy nonchalant opinions current among gay indifferentists withhold you from declaring your attitude and lending a helpful hand. Can you company with Christ, hear the passion of humanity throbbing in His breast, and yet fail to catch the holy fire of His public soul? It is the Christian who, above all men, ought to be at the front in such service. And it is safest at the front, safest for you in the midst of temptations and safest for your own Christian life to be at the front in active work.

The Social Second Birth | Is it not true that every man needs to be spiritually 'born' into the kingdom of Christ? But it is a 'kingdom,' and he needs to have that sacred life enlarged until it takes the circuit of the community and the race. Every man needs to be 'born again' into the corporate life and realise that he is but one cell in the hive and that the life common to the whole civic hive is his concern as truly as his own individual cell. I see signs that a new corporate consciousness is laying hold of the better mind in the new generation.

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HAVE you caught sight of the dawning age, of **The Age of Sociology** the new social problems forming above the sky-line of the early future? Old errors of mediæval religion and reactionary politics, supposed to be dead and well dead in our country, are reconstructing themselves in new guise for another battle. Labour, long ■ serf and vassal, organises itself and threatens to become a new tyrant; capitalists and social Calvinists, who presume to be the elect few of fortune's favour and entitled to privilege, buy up competition and powerful journals and run public opinion and government. Things are struggling uncertainly towards some giant form of collectivism. It is the age of sociology. Commerce, with its swift ships like shuttles in a loom, is weaving a web of common life and interest among all nations and classes; and the patricians and the plebians have to learn that in disease or health, in morals and prosperity they suffer or benefit together like the members of one household or the passengers on the same ship.

It is a a birth-time of great issues in which **Young Men's Coteries** young men may find abundant interest for study and stimulating discussion. Do they gather, to-day as in former days, in societies and lively knots, and debate affairs of state and all the problems in heaven and earth, ventilating somewhat wild opinions perhaps, threshing out public questions and at the same time formulating their

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own thoughts and acquiring the citizen spirit? Or has all their interest nowadays turned to sport and fiction? In such arenas young men have been trained for wider fields of civic service, and numbers who have risen to places of power or leadership were spurred and equipped in such coteries of young men.

Cloistered Self-culture The pleasures of self-culture, among books and reading men, withdraws some of our best from the arena of the world's work and conflicts. In a garden walled around far from the strife of tongues, in arbours and dens of leisured ease, they indulge in refined lotus-eating, and let the outer world wag.

Milton Milton, like Wendell Phillips, paid court to beauty and learning, lived at Cambridge in studious self-culture, and travelled in Italy to pursue his elegant interests. But the echoes of civil war in England reached his ear, and, laying aside his taste for culture and art and song, he hastened home to take his part in his countrymen's fight for liberty. And the fight ennobled him, and in the end he found himself the better qualified to enshrine the 'vision splendid' in immortal epics. Some amount of active service of an unselfish kind will be wholesome for your own development and will keep culture in touch with reality.

Shirkers The Greek 'idiot' shrinks from contact with aggressive and noisy men with whom he must

The Original Idiot

consort if he performs civic functions. He frankly dislikes the wear and worry of councils and platforms, the meddlesome and combative class of men who push themselves forward for public office. He would rather have the grim pleasure of grumbling at an increased 'demand note' than mix himself up with men who have some axe of their own to grind or wallow in a fight or a little notoriety.

It may be only too true, that the self-seeking and the rudely combative are often candidates for civic office, that social and public service is vexing in petty ways. But who are responsible for this state of things? How has it come about? Because the better and more disinterested citizens have refused to sacrifice their domestic comfort and perform their public duties. According to Plato the penalty which the wise have to pay for declining to take part in the government is that they have to live under the government of worse men. But a still heavier penalty has to be paid: the entire life and welfare of the community must suffer.

John Knox shrank in agony of mind from the public work to which his country's conflict called him. ^{Knox} ^{Anselm} ^{Moses} Anselm had to be dragged off from the simpler walks of Christian service to be archbishop. And even Moses ^{pled} that he had no qualifications for leadership, that he was not the man, that—just

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what many Christian citizens say to-day when excusing themselves from Christian work or public duties. Yet such men, once thrust into the field, are often the very men to do the best service for Christ and humanity.

The Holy City Was ever city or country loved with patriotic devotion as Jerusalem was loved by the Jews? Theirs was a double patriotism, both national and religious, for Jerusalem stood for the kingdom and the nation's central life as well as for the temple and Jehovah. There God's honour dwelt. How magnanimously did Nehemiah battle for its restoration! 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning!' We, too, are citizens of Church and Kingdom. Gladly would I stir in the breasts of men, especially of younger men, a like patriotic passion for the kingdom of man and the kingdom of God, and inspire them to take up their franchise in that united Empire of Christ and contribute some service towards its triumph. Hark to William Blake :

'Bring me my bow of burning gold !
Bring me my arrows of desire !
Bring me my spear : O clouds unfold !
Bring me my chariot of fire !

'I will not cease from mortal fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.'

Art and the Man

“Artists, as a class, have intense sensitiveness, and, in comparison with the individuals with whom they be obliged to spend their lives, they must always seem to be morbid, fantastic, unreasonable. They exaggerate. They think more than there is to think, feel more than there is to feel, see more than there is to see. . . . Every work of art is the outcome of its creator’s personality. . . . Young persons with refined tastes come to fancy that, in order to excel in any of the arts, it is right to seek out wild companions, to visit strange haunts, to scoff at the respectable, to despise simple things, to defy etiquette. . . . One true love will bestow ■ deeper insight into the world than years of gallantry.”

JOHN OLIVER HOBBS, *The Artist’s Life*.

XVII

Art and the Man

FOR the artist in cadence or colour or grace or Artists
Wine
form, the wine of life is the joy of expression: not the achievement or finished article in itself so much as the inherent pleasure of self-expression. Much of what he or she feels and ideally sees can never be translated to canvas or music or language; the best of it escapes him; but it has distilled its bliss in the hours of flush and vision.

If it be self-expression, if he must put himself into it, if it reacts on him expansively like wine, then certainly there are close and potent relations between Art and the Man.

The more academic question we may take first—how the Man's life affects his Art; then the more interesting and urgent question—how his Art reacts for good and ill upon the Man.

I

IF it is to possess true merit, the musician, the Man's
Re-action
on Art
painter, the writer must put *himself* into his workmanship—unless he is as yet only at the purely imitative age and dominated by some

Art and the Man

master. Can we say that the art may rise to higher levels than the man himself?

**Milton's
Heroic
Poem**

Milton, travelling in Italy and preparing for the time when he could write a heroic poem, knew that before he could write the heroic poem he must himself first live the heroic life; and his magnanimous service of the State and patient submission to blindness made him ready before being brought to his epical task. But our minds revert to eminent instances which seem to show that heroic and exquisite work may come from one who is living an unworthy life.

'Beauty, Goodness, and Truth are three sisters never sundered without tears,' I remember as the saying of a distinguished lover of art and its treasures in Italy. From the opposite standpoint you more frequently hear it demanded, What has goodness, what has character, to do with art? Art is art, and is independent of ethic.

**The Man
below his
Gift**

It may not suit our favourite theory of human nature, yet it seems unquestionable, that a man's distinctive gift is separable from himself as a whole; the art-product may not reflect the man in his entire personality but may correspond only to one side of his nature; what he can do may be far superior, as it may also be far inferior, to what he is. Human nature is capable of accommodating singularly contradictory elements at one and the same time.

Art and the Man

See Turner's achievements on the walls of our galleries, and then remember Turner's reaction at times into 'the pleasures of a sailor on the spree.' **Turner 'on the Spree'** Chateaubriand, most exquisite artist in literature and painting, could descend to coarse obscenity, and then return to heights of vision and dazzle you with the magic of beauty—and apparently be true to himself in each character. It is one of the shocks of youth, to discover how many of the gifted and notable have lived these two incongruous lives. And some are tempted by such insinuating examples to sever their art from all the conventions of ethics and religion, and to live for nothing but their art as though nothing else mattered.

What are we to say of this modern version of the Pagan Greek ideal?

It may be said that what the artist is in himself **Bad Man** will ultimately express itself in his work. One **v. Bad Work** answer—not the one great answer—is that the gross or cynical in his personality will in the long run tarnish and mar his handiwork. He may never be aware of it, but people in their dumb sub-consciousness will detect the sinister influence of his character on his productions, if you allow time enough.

Especially is this true of the imitators of genius. Genius in its own person may achieve wonders by way of self-contradiction. But we cannot safely follow or argue from the incomparable cases.

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Those who have talent without the miracle-working power of genius will sooner and more surely show the deterioration which stealthily overtakes those who sport with moral laws and divine ideals.

Business v. Character Yet we do not speak after this fashion to a man of business, telling him that he must be good and Christian else his business will suffer. Character, it is most true, has usually a share in procuring a man a stable commercial standing. Yet he may prosper and flourish like a green bay tree in spite of his bad private life. There is, I know, a much closer relationship between the man and his work in art than there can be in business. Art demands the embodiment of *soul* and therefore betrays the real man as business does not. But, true and important as this is, it is not the primary argument proper to the case. Our case is set to a too calculating motive, on a shifting basis, if we proclaim that a man's craft will suffer if he refuses to live a good personal life.

Goodness in its own Right Goodness stands on its own feet; it claims you¹ on the ground of its own appeal, whatever your success otherwise. Character, the pure and Christian life, is the great imperative of the inner consciousness altogether apart from profit or loss, is its own argument for its own sake. "Business

¹ This paper in substance was read to members of the Art Students' Christian Union, London, and reprinted in part at their request.

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is business": therefore what? Therefore disregard religion and debar the moral law from regulating our commercial action? As absurd it would be to argue: Art is art; therefore let us give up every other consideration, drink deep draughts of all human sensations and mixed pleasures, and refuse bondage to moral obligations and Divine calls. Whether it be business or art, each has its own segment of life; and art has a right to command you to love and create the beautiful for its own sake. But God is lord of the whole life; and the greater and universal commandment is, Be Good, good over the whole of life; pursue goodness for goodness' own sake as well as art for art's sake.

There is surely tragic unfitness in a man or woman producing things of beauty and being unbeautiful, in creating things admirable in taste and being personally far from admirable. That is to succeed out-of-doors and fail at home, to delight in beauty on the level of sense and miss it or defy it and rest content with deformity on the upper levels of spirit.

Mr G. K. Chesterton says: 'The idea of following art through everything for itself alone, through extravagance, through cruelty, through morbidity, is just exactly as superstitious as the idea of following theology for itself alone through extravagance and cruelty and morbidity. To deny that Baudelaire is loathsome, or Nietzsche inhuman, because we stand

Mr Ches-
terton

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in awe of beauty, is just the same thing as denying that the Court of Pope Julius was loathsome, or the rack inhuman, because we stand in awe of religion.' You receive a shock, like the clash of incongruities, when you meet some one whose superb workmanship you have rejoiced in and find him selfish or cynical or godless.

**The
Finest
Fine-art** The finest of all fine arts is surely the art of moulding and perfecting character and life; and the highest product of this world-school is the saintly spirit and the heroic life.

'Ye are better than all the poems
That ever were written or read;
For ye are living poems,
And all the rest are dead.'

**Hebrew
Greek
Christian** The Hebrew for righteousness at the foundation of manhood, the Greek for beauty in self-development, but the Christian is known for both righteousness and beauty, combined in one phrase, 'the beauty of holiness,' and realised in One Son of Man. The fine taste which you have cultivated in one region should enable you the better to appreciate the æsthetic of goodness, which is offended at sin and vice as a thing ugly and coarse, and charmed with gracious purity and sacrificial love as a thing exquisite and elevating.

Whistler's horror of preaching in the realm of the arts is notorious and typical. But it is not a question whether you should preach in song and

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painting and literature. You may not follow G. F. Watts and Madame Antionette Sterling in their choice of improving themes. But one thing is imperative—that you work in the materials of truth and wholesome sweetness, and select what accords with that moral quality which runs through the whole grain of human life.

In subtle ways and in the long run the Man projects his own personal quality upon his Art-work.

II

ART in its turn exerts a reflex influence on the Man, for better or for worse. Art's Reaction on the Man

R. L. Stevenson touched one of the reactions of the artistic life when he reminded us that art is essentially a caterer to pleasure. However it may incidentally elevate, it primarily aims at gratifying the finer senses of others, and in the very act of production it indulges ethereal tastes in the artist. For the effective practice of your art you have to yield yourselves to transient moods and vibratory impressions, to enter intensely into imaginary situations until you almost lose your own identity, and to pass swiftly from the world of bald realities to the realm of æsthetic ideals and emotional tempers. The Artistic Temperament

From the character of your work as well as from your artistic temperament, you are apt to

Art and the Man

**Moods
and
Morals** become the creature of elusive and fleeting feelings, to be swayed by shifting tides of desire now this way and now that, and to become erratic, of uncertain mood and temper. You are tempted to find your whole life in the luxurious sense of beauty and thrill, to fret at and refuse the arduous tasks and binding moral duties of life, and, like Tito Melema in *Romola*, to claim your right to all the delectable refinements and facile gratifications that minister to the artistic sense, without considering how others in consequence may have to drudge or suffer. You are all the more open to the seduction of such pleasures because they are refined and not gross, and you are ready to plead your artistic temperament as a sufficient excuse for humours of nonchalance and heedlessness. Every calling in life—whether in business, the professions, or public service—has its own peculiar risks to be resisted. You have deliberately to fight against these tidal and vagrant elements in your nature and environment. Subdue them to the mastery of your will, and discipline yourself by some daily act of unselfish dutifulness.

**The Lust
of Praise** Having your great moments of self-expression, coveting effects, living to some extent on favour, depending so largely upon worldly patronage, you are apt to feed on the sweets of homage and praise, to develop jealous irritabilities, and to lose your sturdier character in the partialities of friendly

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sets and the artificialities of society. Or, if unappreciated to the full measure of your merit, you are prompted to take refuge in a proud solitude.

Cast among associates who as a rule ignore the wholesome conventions of a devotional Sunday and take the fullest advantage of the law of liberty in conduct and talk, living in a world where you often find 'sense at war with soul,' you, more than the prosaic and practical tribes of men, need spiritual aids and defences superior to your own natural mind, the very present help of the Great Companion, the correctives of prayer and the keeping of Christ.

Social
Peril

We who are impressionable listeners know well how music can play with mystic fingers upon all the strings of our higher and lower nature. It runs up every nerve of sensibility, now wooing our hearts to peace and all gentle loves and virtues, now rending us with disparting and warring movements and then healing and restoring us in its returning harmonies, now firing our blood with the spirit of battle, and again sweeping us with surging waves of lush desire for roving delights and sensuous ease, careless of mankind.

Sensuous
Music

How is it then with those who produce this effect on us? You have to feel the passion of the piece, to lend your whole being to the variable sensations which must be intense in you if you are

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to transmit their impression to others. Enthused thus with the glow of all vital feeling and the rapture of the radiant hour, you find yourself sometimes excited to a state of spirit well-nigh sensuous, and swayed by the thrill of a wild liberty and luscious delights that tempt you far from the sense of your Master's favour.

**Musical
Passion
v. Christ**

An advanced music student writes privately to me: 'When we have handed over our life to Christ, how can we look Him straight in the face and at the same time let our passionate fancies loose in interpreting the sensuous class of music which calls forth rank thoughts out of keeping with the new life of the Spirit? To discard this class of music means to give up some of Chopin and Wagner and almost half of the most lovely work ever composed. If the rule of Christ in our hearts requires us to discard everything that stirs such abandonment of fancy, then we are shut out from success in our career, except through oratorio and ballad. Music is nearly all passion and sorrow, the joy and praise being only realisable by contrast. Must it be, therefore, Christ *or* music?'

**The Price
of Dis-
cipleship**

Here we witness the ancient conflict between the Greek spirit and the spirit of Christ; and tragic, now as then, is the struggle of those whose tastes and profession set them in the cross-seas between the two. The artist, like many a man in other perilous situations, may have to make a heavy

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sacrifice of his prospects upon the altar of Christ for the sake of purity and the higher life. If you cannot by force of will free your fancy from these wild sensations, you are surely bound, for the safety of your Christian character, to take up your cross and restrict yourself to the more wholesome fields of your art.

But can you not mentally substitute nobler **Pure Passions** passions and heroic loves for those that desecrate? Of Schumann's widow it is told that, whenever she was going to play any of her husband's music in public, she read over some of his old letters to her, written in the lover days. Thus, she declared, his very life seemed to fill her, and she was better able to interpret his work. You have doubtless within your call some such resources of pure love, some 'Cry of the Children,' some rescue, some Beatrice like her in whom Dante glorified a sacred passion and spent his fires for his own purification. Can you not, by transference of imagination to the grander enthusiasms of life, find the pathos and passion you need? Longer experience teaches us detachment and restraint. Snatch your mind away as speedily as possible and revert to the sacred Presence for the corrective and merciful help you need. By the discipline of prayer and perpetual reliance on Christ, you may learn to play your part like an actor without allowing yourself to be inwardly identified with the character you

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represent, and to escape and be your better self unchanged.

Art as a
Religion

‘THE good is the enemy of the best,’ according to the half-true French aphorism ; and art serves for some of its devotees as a substitute for religion. It lends them a full life of sense and soul, sweeping in flood-tide all the channels of their poetic nature. It dilates and exalts them like the old Greek inspiration, and tends to satisfy them as a sort of religious worship. Those who dwell among symbols of beauty and pour out their ardours upon creative achievement, those who feed upon ideals and pulsate with artistic emotions, are tempted to rest content with these inspirations and say that their higher nature needs nothing more. They are liable to be deceived by this æsthetic counterfeit of devotion all the more because it is spirituelle and refining.

The
Soul's
Awaking

The next of kin are the last to believe. Artistic exhilaration, next of kin to spiritual experience, has detained numbers on the borderland of the Divine life. Some feel for a period that they have no need of Christ. Then the ‘Dweller in the Innermost’ awakes from a dormant insensibility, and they find their spirits hungry for righteousness and the infinite Good. Their eyes are holden until conscience has its turn and Christ talks with their hearts and meets that wistful yearning for a

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soul-filling bliss which His Spirit has aroused. Let not the good hold you back from the best, nor the flush of natural 'soul' serve you instead of the spiritual life which it resembles. 'Taste life in all its sensations,' say some. At any rate taste that life which is 'life indeed'; Christ holds the cup to your lips.

James Smetham, that devout lover of both art and holiness, and friend of Ruskin, knew how Christ makes a captivating appeal to the artistic imagination. Christ, he said, 'has all the colour elements of life: mystery, strangeness, pathos, suggestion, ecstasy, love. He appeals to the temper of wonder, and creates that mood in which alone he can be understood.' And, for this cause, lovers of the exquisite in art and literature have often shown the fullest artistic appreciation of Christianity, but without any heart for it as a vital experience. They have been seized by its celestial ideals, its mystical symbolism, its 'sweet Galilean vision,' its 'Messiah' themes in music, its picturesque heroisms of devotion. It has afforded them subjects and ideal materials. But it has met no tang of liking for it as a personal life.

Walter Pater, in *Marius the Epicurean*, weaves the chains of sympathy between art and religion, but he cannot approach Christ by the way of the cross, nor answer His spiritual message. Goethe felt the appeal of the Christ-ideal; and modern

James
Smetham
on Christ

The
Artist's
Christ

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writers, like Mr Zangwill, have projected themselves into imaginative sympathy with the Christian hope and imagery. But it has stopped at imaginative or poetic sympathy, stopped short of conviction and surrender. Here again, if you have the artistic temperament, you have to escape from the limits of your special gift and be, not merely responsive to the imaginative appeal of Christ, but quickened to humble surrender and personal attachment in thought and life. Let Him rake conscience and expose the ugly things of sin, deliver to you the great message of life eternal and develop in you the finest of all fine-art senses in things of grace and saintly beauty.

**The
Cross an
Offence** **S**OME essential factors in Christianity, like the real cross, are an offence to the artistic spirit of the natural man.

William Watson has expressed his artistic and agnostic revulsion from the horrid exhibition of stark agony on the cross. Over such sights of suffering, displeasing to the dainty senses of the artist, he may, indeed, throw a glamour of colour and melody. But what of the moral demands of the cross?

Swinburne and Walt Whitman revel in the holiness of human nature and all its impulses and its demands. Self-satisfaction and self-development are to them supreme laws. They find bliss in the

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glow of sense and the grace of life. Now the cross is not merely a point in sacred history ; it is a law of self-suppression ; it is a stab to the pride of life and the lust of the eye ; it means the humbling of the flesh, the acceptance of sheer mercy, the denial of self, and the supremacy of the spirit over the delights of impulse. Here is your testing-point, whether your love of beauty and self-development and delicate taste will resent or will surrender to the law of sacrifice, humility, and the denial of your natural self.

The
Swin-
burne
School

To Tissot, Munkacsy, Handel, and imitators of the Passion Play the cross is a vivid moving tragedy ; and you may find sweet pathos in turning it into music and dabbling in pigments mixed of love and sorrow. But it should be bitter-sweet—first bitter in shame, of self and sin, and then sweetened with love and the joyous power of the new life.

With your artistic sensibilities you may recoil from what is painful in the world and religious duty. But beware of over-refinement and fastidious artistry, for it misses the broad moral effects of inviolable truth and the lesson of life. You have to overcome delicate revulsions of daintiness, to take a hand in the conflicts of the vulgar world, and go with Christ along the way of the cross.

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Sorrow and Song 'SORROW and Song' are close of kin. Those who pass through trial and suffering win a mystic power. 'Those who suffer most have most to give.' They gain in sympathy, fine perception of both the minor and the major key notes of human experience, a sense of the poignancy of life in joy and distress. All this enables them to enter into and interpret compositions written under stress of like emotion, to reproduce the heavings and gropings and anguish-cries that vibrate through the masterpieces. One has often noticed that those who wring or thrill our innermost feelings betray what I may call a scar in their voice, the print of the nails in their personality and work. That penetrating *timbre* in the voice springs from intensified soul, and is often the compensating outcome of sorrow and Christian devotion. Your work will be all the richer, as well as purer, if you are baptised into Christ and the sense of all human conditions.

Does Christ and Passion But—writes the student-correspondent aforementioned—'with Christ has come the healing of the scar, the binding up of the broken heart; and the more I know of Christ the more complete becomes my joy; the crosses are no longer dragged heavily. When the keen edge of suffering is lost, one seems to lose a factor in the highest musicianship by losing the power to feel acutely and transmit the pleasure-pain to the

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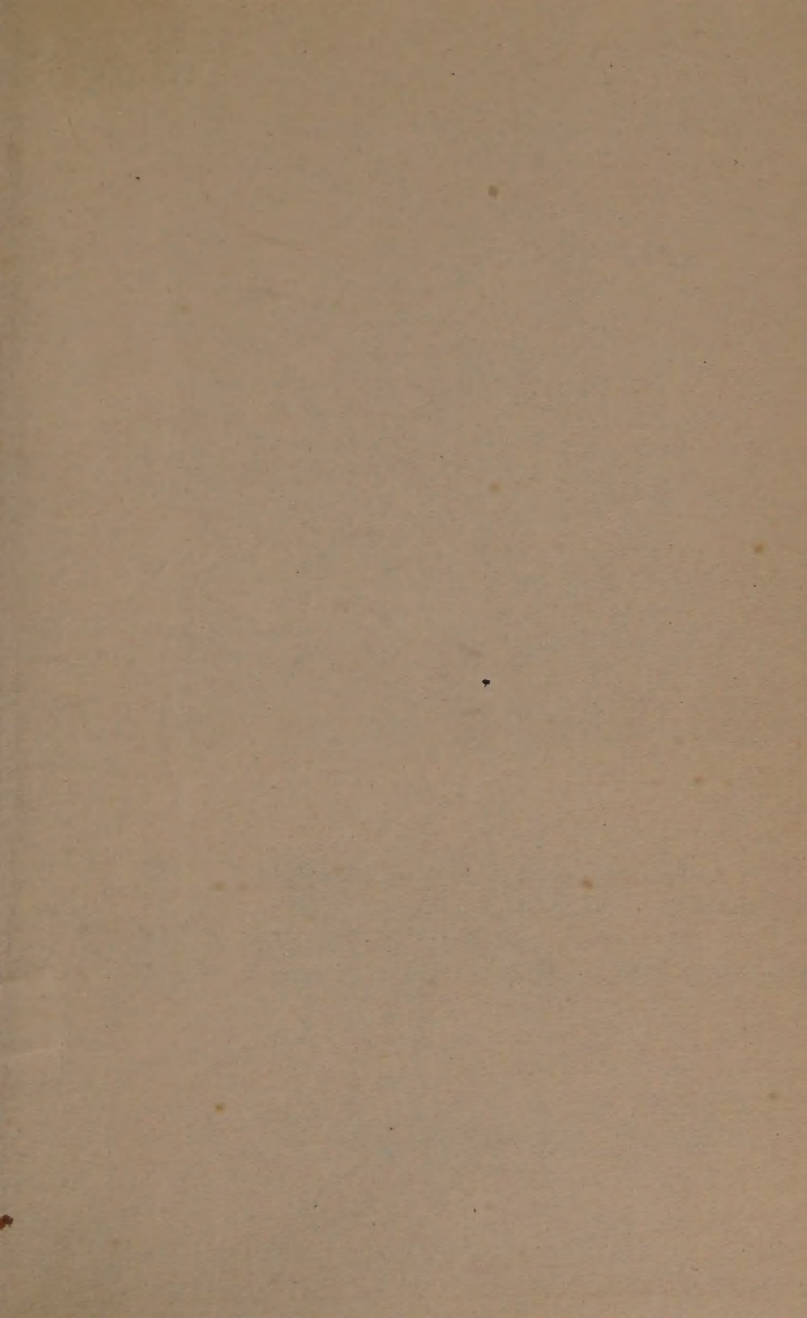
audience.' Does Christ, then, take away a secret of power in art?

No, for the chords can still be made to vibrate at the memory of past anguish and yearning. You can bring yourself into imaginative sympathy with your previous sufferings. And other sufferings come only too surely. Better still, Christ shares with you His own heart-ache for mankind; 'the sorrow of others throws it shadow over me'; the poignancy of life brings a sympathetic scar. And, in many ways, He keeps the rarer sensibilities tender and fresh if we keep in close touch with Him.

Through such divine and humane inspirations 'His Art-soul will suffuse your faculties, glow through your work, and create in yourself the finest beauty and all 'white celestial thoughts.'

We are His 'poiema,' composition, art-work; He is the 'poietes' or poet-creator; and the finished product of His hand is the ripe, chaste, heroic Christian character. Catch His idea for yourself, and with hearty goodwill assist Him to realise His ideal and the joy of creative self-expression—the image of Himself.

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